

A CHRONICLE OF
THE CARMELITES IN PERSIA

A CHRONICLE
of the
CARMELITES IN PERSIA
*and the Papal Mission of the XVIIth
and XVIIIth centuries*

VOLUME I

1939
EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE
LONDON

First published in 1939

Copyright strictly reserved

Ad piam memoriam
Fratrum multorum, qui expleto Domini praecepto
Carmelitarum matrici in missione
Discalceatorum ad terram ingratham, haud
vero infructuosam colendam tot aerumnas
perpessi sunt, ut nomina gestaque,
partim diuturno silentio tradita, partim
oblivione obruta, nunc tandem debita laude recepta,
adventuris Fratribus quasi Pharos
in perpetuum enitescant, haec humillime dicata est
relatio.

cum clarissimus auctor operis, cui titulus *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia, and the Papal Mission of the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries* illud approbationi nostrae subicere voluerit, quippe cum in illo ex professo agatur de rebus ad Historiam Missionum Ordinis Nostri spectantibus, nos, qui illud a duobus censoribus ad id deputatis examinari fecimus, prae laudatum opus non solum, quod ad nos attinet, laeto animo approbamus, immo potius gratulamur clarissimo auctori ad opus tam praeclare absolutum et omnibus numeris perfectum, atque fidem facimus res ad historiam Missionis nostrae Persicae in hoc opere spectantes penitus respondere documentis authenticis, tam in Archivo nostro, quam in Archivo S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide asservatis. Quapropter ex corde exoptamus, ut opus supra laudatum clarissimi auctoris prosperum successum sortiatur.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus nostris Generalitiis, die 20 martii 1938.

FR. PETRUS THOMAS a Virgine Carmeli
Praepositus Generalis Ordinis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum

(Translation)

AS the distinguished author of the work entitled *A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia, and the Papal Mission of the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries* has wished to submit it for our approval, inasmuch as in it matters regarding the History of the Missions of Our Order are specifically treated, We, who have had it examined by two censors specially deputed for this purpose, not only gladly approve, in so far as pertains to us to do so, the above-mentioned work, but moreover we congratulate the distinguished author on a work which in every respect has been composed with such great perfection, and we testify that the matters regarding the history of our Persian Mission in this work entirely correspond with the original documents preserved whether in our Archives or in the Archives of the Sac. Congregation de Propaganda Fide, Wherefore we whole-heartedly wish every success to the work of the distinguished author above commended.

Given at Rome, from the House of our Generalate, the 20th day of March 1938.

(sd.) FR. PETER THOMAS of the Virgin of Carmel
Praepositus General of the Order of Discalced Carmelites



With every good wish and blessing

*Fr. Peter Thomas of the Queen of Carmel-,
Praepositus General of the Order of Discalced Carmelites.*

Rome, March 21-1938-

HIS Eminence Cardinal RAPHAEL CHARLES ROSSI, O C D
(from the Etrurian Province of the Order)
Cardinal Protector of the Order of Discalced Carmelites



The undersigned Cardinal, deeply grateful for the great benevolence shown His Holy Order, cordially grants the requested Blessing, as an avowal of all the most precious and abundant heavenly Blessings

Rome, March 28, 1938

J. R. C. Card. Rossi

Ord. Carm. Disc.

His Eminence Cardinal ADEODATUS JOHN PIAZZA, O.C.D.
(from the Venetian Province of the Order) Cardinal Patriarch of Venice



*Cordialmente benedico l'Autore della Storia
della Missione Nostra in Persia, vivamente con-
piacendomi di tale lavoro che illustra le bene-
merenze del N. S. Ordine in un campo così arduo
di apostolato, e partecipando con gaudio a questa
nuova glorificazione dell'Ordine a cui sono felice di
appartenere.*
Venera, 11 IV 38. *F. Adeodato Card. Piazza O.C.D.*
Patriarca di Venezia.

(Translation of the autographed inscription)

I cordially bless the author of the History of Our Mission in Persia, and I take a lively pleasure in such a work which sheds light on the meritorious deeds of our holy Order in so arduous a field of apostolate, and join with gladness in this new glorification of the Order, to which I am happy to belong.

FR. ADEODATO G. CARD. PIAZZA, O.C.D.

CONTENTS

Part I

ABBREVIATIONS	PAGE xxiii
FOREWORD	xxv

INTRODUCTORY HISTORICAL REVIEW UP TO 1585

Scope of this chapter—other Religious Orders working in Asia before 1600	3
Origin of the Carmelites—the ‘Reform’ of 1582 and beginnings of the Discalced branch extended to Italy, 1584—in spite of being damped the missionary spirit bursts into flame, the Holy Land in view, but Pope Clement VIII calls on the Congregation of Italy to undertake activities in Persia	4
The Popes, Christendom and the Turkish menace—the gradual inroads of the Turks into Europe from 1359, and Christian resistance—Lepanto to 1603	10
The Popes and attempts to bring about Leagues against the Turks among the sovereigns of Christendom—overtures of the Persians in 1515 to the Grand Master of Rhodes for joint action against the Turks—the tangled situation in Europe by 1600	13
After Lepanto Pope S. Pius V urges Shah Tahmasp I to combine with Christian sovereigns against the Turks—letters to Don John of Austria regarding delegations to Persia—in 1579 Persia sends emissary to Portugal to invite Christian princes to move against the Turks—‘Instructions’ for an envoy to Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh to urge military operations—the Augustinian Fr. Simon of the Conception goes to the Shah, 1582, on the same errand—correspondence between Clement VIII and ‘Abbas I	19
The Safawi dynasty, how it arose, and its particular animus against the Ottoman sultans—the wars between Persia and Turkey—Sultan Sulaiman the ‘Lawgiver’ or ‘Magnificent’ and his campaigns against Persia of 1534 and 1553—description of his progress to the war, and the killing of his son Mustafa—methods of campaigning—Vincenzo degl’Alessandri’s description of Shah Tahmasp’s Court, government and land in 1574—Shah ‘Isma’il II and his anti-Turkish bias—war between the two empires in Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh’s time	27

REIGN OF SHAH ‘ABBAS I

Obscure circumstances of his accession as a younger son—approximate date of his birth—his early military operations in outlying provinces and recovery of territory	66
Particular dislike of ‘Abbas I for the Turks—his employment of the brothers Sherley from 1599—sends Anthony Sherley to Europe, 1599—his proposals in name of the Shah for joint operations against the Turks—the charter offered by Shah ‘Abbas to the Christians—the ‘Instructions’ of Sherley about the Confederacy, and offer to place all schismatics under obedience to the Holy Sec, 1601—the Sultan suggests peace to ‘Abbas I—dispatch in 1601 of the Jesuit da Costa and of Miranda to Persia by Pope Clement VIII, who urged attack on Turkish territory by the Persian king—their eccentric conduct—dispatch from Goa of three Portuguese Augustinian	

Hermits, 1603, to Isfahan—war between Persia and Turkey, 1604–7—conquest of the lower Caucasus region by the Persians—temporary collapse in provinces of Asiatic Turkey by rebellions—overrunning Armenia Major, 'Abbas I removes the Armenian population, and founds for some of them a new Julfa outside Isfahan—indiscretions by the Augustinians awaken the Shah's ill-will and suspicions—complaints of 'Abbas I against the Portuguese, in Hurmuz especially

69

Organization and start, 1604, of the Carmelite mission, and letters of the Pope recommending them—obstruction and sufferings in Russia—survivors of the party reach Persian soil, 1607—entertainment and honours showed them by Persian officials on the road to Isfahan—the conflict between missionary humility and their status as envoys—the first meeting with Robert Sherley—suspicions of 'Abbas I, and the audiences given to the Carmelites—their Superior asks for Robert Sherley to be permitted to return to Europe, and himself leaves, 1608, for Rome—the communications which passed between Isfahan and Rome—hazardous journey of Fr. Paul Simon via Baghdad—Pope Paul V urges king of Spain to action against the Turks, sending Fr. Paul Simon as his delegate—Robert Sherley arrives in Rome and Spain—account of Sherley, his Catholicism, and marriage, and journey to European Courts—his 'memorial' to Pope Paul V, 1609, annotated by the Pope—proposed joint action against the Turks—Sherley in England

104

Description of Persia and habits of the people by Fr. Paul Simon—the Armenians and their transplantation—Shah 'Abbas I's methods of dispatching business—appraisement of him and his resources

155

Difficulties and needs for the new mission defined by Fr. John Thaddeus—unstable disposition and character of 'Abbas I, and the Carmelites prepare to move to Hurmuz—pressure of the Shah on the Armenians of Julfa, and his indecorous habits—his annoyance over the arbitrary actions of the Portuguese officers at Hurmuz—description of the journey of Frs. Redempt and Benignus via Aleppo and Baghdad to Isfahan—impatience and indignation of 'Abbas I over the failure of Christian sovereigns to take hostile action against the Turks expressed in audiences given to the Carmelites—long narratives of the manner of these audiences—description by the Fathers named of Isfahan and the Shah—Fr. Vincent goes to Rome, 1610, in connection with a foundation at Hurmuz—the Shah's remonstrance to the Pope—'Abbas I sends Fr. John Thaddeus as his envoy to Europe via Muscovy—the Carmelite Religious is kept a prisoner or hostage in Astrakhan for three years, finally released after threats from 'Abbas I

163

The Syrian Michelangelo Coray, Tuscan envoy—more Carmelite recruits—Fr. Vincent returns from Europe—he founds a hospice at Hurmuz, and goes to Goa, endeavouring to secure a footing for the Carmelites there—Fr. Antonio da Gouvea (as Bishop of Cyrene) returns to Persia, becomes involved in altercation with 'Abbas I over the consignments of silk for sale—Armenians made to suffer by forced conversion to Islam—the Bishop of Cyrene escapes to the coast—Frs. Redempt and Bartholomew visit the 'Katholikos' at Echmiadzin to deliver Papal Brief—their reception—they go on to see the Uniat (Catholic) Armenians in Nakhchiwan district—worsening of relations between Persians and Portuguese in Hurmuz—Imam Quli Khan, the viceroy of Fars, attacks Portuguese fort at Gāmburun—Frs. Leander and Louis Francis deputed by him to Hurmuz to make demands

197

'Count' Robert Sherley returns to Isfahan, 1615, and is at once sent back by 'Abbas I to Europe, accompanied by Fr. Redempt—itinerary between Isfahan and Hurmuz—Sherley well received at Hurmuz, where he takes back Portuguese prisoners released by Persians—Sherley and Fr. Redempt at Goa, negotiations with the viceroy—their voyage to Lisbon—Fr. Redempt instructed by Spanish Court to return to Persia, 1619, but dies—the Spanish ambassador, Don Garcia de Silva, in Persia

214

The (English) East India Company, in its hostility to the Portuguese, makes terms with the Persians—Fr. John Thaddeus and his line of procedure, his translations of the Gospels and Psalms—the new convent premises of the Carmelites—renewal of war with the Turks, and Fr. John Thaddeus follows the Shah to Ardabil—his views on relations with the schismatics—Pietro della Valle in Persia, a friend of the Carmelites—Mr. George Strachan the Scot, their teacher in Arabic—application from Luristan for missionaries to be sent there—reception of Don Garcia de Silva, ambassador from Philip III, at Qazwin—protest and complaint by king of Spain and Portugal over seizure of Bahrain, the pearl fishery, from his possession, and request for its restitution—departure of the ambassador—matter of the sale of the silk 228

'Abbas I watches the ceremonies of the Armenian Epiphany, and blessing of the water of the river—the Portuguese commanders at Hurmuz appeal for Fr. John Thaddeus' mediation with the Shah—the latter becomes seriously ill, 1620—account of audience in June 1621, when both the Carmelite Fathers and the Agent and staff of the East India Company present, and the Shah discusses differences of religious belief between Christians—'Abbas I, offended, turns on the Armenians in the villages of the district to force their conversion to Islam—the Shah has his second son, Khudabandeh Mirza, blinded and imprisoned—the tension at Hurmuz increases, 1621—'Abbas I shuns the Carmelites, makes compact with the English for joint capture of Hurmuz from the Portuguese—Persians converted by the Carmelites seized on the road to Hurmuz, two martyred there, three others taken back to Isfahan and there put to death—the Carmelites confined to their convent for months—preliminary steps in Rome for recognition of the martyrdoms 244

The attack on Hurmuz, and its capture, 1622—loss of the Carmelite Residence there—'Abbas I seizes Kandahar in the east, 1622—Baghdad captured by him from the Turks, 1623—he begins again to force the Armenians round Isfahan to embrace Islam—financial difficulties of the missionaries, their appeal to the Pope—the Brief of encouragement from Urban VIII, and a special indulgence—the Carmelites open a hospice at Basra, sending Fr. Basil from Isfahan, 1623—the same year they found a Residence at Shiraz—the help of Imam Quli Khan, the viceroy, in this—recognition of the foundation at Goa by the Definitory General, 1624 266

Movements of 'Abbas I, 1623–5, increasing disturbances in the country, the rising in Georgia—in his absence the Carmelites arrested and taken before the Daruga, in error for the Augustinians, 1626—arrival of the first Capuchin missionaries sent by Cardinal de Richelieu—Imam Quli Khan makes an expedition against Basra—death of 'Abbas I—Fr. John Thaddeus' account of him—Pope Urban VIII's Brief to him arrived after his death—strictures of the Agents of the East India Company on his cruelty—his infamous edict about property of Christians, relatives of apostates—death of Sir Robert Sherley, 1629, at Qazwin—vicissitudes of his wife, Teresa, before and after his death in regard to her religion, and her retirement to Rome—departure of Fr. John Thaddeus, 1628, for Rome—desire of Catholic Armenians for a bishop—how Fr. John Thaddeus came to be chosen first Bishop of Isfahan—appointment of Fr. Timothy Perez, a Calzed Carmelite, as his coadjutor, with title of Baghdad, 1632—Urban VIII notifies Shah Safi by Brief of the double appointment—death through an accident in Catalonia of Bishop John Thaddeus, 1633—the first printing-press in Arabic type brought by Carmelites to Persia 281

REIGN OF SHAH SAFI

His accession and its celebrations—the Carmelites are received in audience—his friendliness towards Christians—replies to Pope Urban VIII's letter of 1624, and renews all privileges accorded by his predecessors to the Carmelites—the Turks invade Persia, 1630—but are repulsed, and Shah Safi at Baghdad, 1631—Imam Quli Khan, the viceroy of Fars, again attacks Basra, but is put to death by the Shah—he had concluded convention with the Portuguese permitting them to farm half the Customs of Kung—the Shah on an expedition in Georgia,

1634—his disposition, and doubtful ground for some charges made against him by modern European historians—the Carmelites regard him as a better man, better disposed towards Christians than his grandfather—the favours given, and kindness shown by him to Carmelites—a Turkish army marches into Greater Armenia, 1637—a great Turkish force regains Baghdad for the Ottoman Empire, 1638—Fr. Melchior killed on frontier of Muscovy, accompanying a Polish envoy

307

Carmelites become more interested in work among the Armenians of Julfa than among Persians—the relations of Fr. Dimas with the 'Katholikos' Moses, who desires reunion with Rome, and with the monks at Julfa—Fr. Dimas, much liked by Armenians, dies 1639—the Fathers no longer having the liberal help of Imam Quli Khan, the Residence at Shiraz is shut for some years through lack of funds—Carmelites endeavour to get Circassian colony in Fars, forcibly transplanted by Shah 'Abbas and made Muslim, to return to Christian Faith

317

Basra—the Mandaean, so-called Christians of S. John—description by Fr. Basil of their habits and habitat—he suggests the king of Spain and Portugal should give them a location in Portuguese controlled lands on the Arabian shore of the Gulf—their numbers—interest of the Roman Curia in the matter, and instructions from the Congregation de Prop. Fide—project to settle them at Dobba, but local Arabs rise and expel Portuguese, preventing execution of the proposal—the viceroy of Goa still interested in a settlement, 1646—Fr. Ignatius' book on *Origin, Customs, Rites and Errors of the so-called Christians of S. John*—his list of their chief colonies in the region, their rites and aversions—transplantation to Portuguese territory ceases with loss of Masqat and Ceylon, 1649–57—Mandaean in Persia forced to apostatize by decree of 'Abbas II, 1657—their numbers estimated, 1660—Carmelites at Basra, 1679, decide that no more shall be baptized in view of their failure to keep away from the pagan rites and beliefs—orthodox Muslim opinion on the origin and tenets of Mandaean

324

Bishop Timothy Perez succeeds as Bishop of Isfahan, 1633, but will not go out to the East, and finally is given a suffragan bishopric in Spain—Fr. Dimas nominated, 1632, bishop of Baghdad but refuses altogether—Madame Ricouart, 1637, in France offers capital sum for endowment of bishopric of Baghdad, provided occupant of see always Frenchman—the Carmelite Fr. Bernard of S. Teresa appointed, 1638—and Apostolic Administrator of diocese of Isfahan—he reaches Erivan, 1640—his conference with the 'Katholikos' at Echmiadzin—he goes to the Catholic (Uniat) Armenians of Nakhchiwan—his audience with Shah Safi, 1640—buys a house and converts it for his 'cathedral', 1641—difficulties with the Armenians—he returns to Europe, 1642, and avoids return to Persia—is part founder of seminary of 'Missions Étrangères de Paris'

340

Death of Shah Safi, when proceeding on campaign to recover Kandahar

350

REIGN OF SHAH 'ABBAS II

The Visitor General, Fr. Charles, goes to 'Qazwin for confirmation of the 'privileges' granted by the Shah's predecessors—paucity of details furnished by missionaries about the country in this reign—the young Shah succeeds in regaining Kandahar, struggle for that frontier position continued—hostility to Turks wanes in this reign—Brief from Pope Innocent X of 1646 urges the young Shah to take action against the Turks—Fr. Ferdinand Gioerida, nephew of P. della Valle's wife, its bearer—struggle in the Persian Gulf between Dutch and Portuguese, and of the latter with the Arabs—the Arabs take Masqat by storm, December 1649, eclipse of Portuguese influence—the Dutch masters of trade in the region and in Ceylon by 1657—the Carmelites at Basra lose their main financial support—attitude of the Dutch towards the Carmelites—the Fathers act at Basra as transmitters of correspondence for the European East India companies—erroneous impression of historians as to 'Abbas II favouring Christians and

his religious toleration—his Wazir oppresses Syrians and Armenians at Julfa, 1646—Shah orders that all Jews and Mandaeans should become Muslims—pressure brought on the Armenians—all Armenians compelled to evacuate city of Isfahan, and to live outside—enforcement of 'Abbas I's iniquitous decree regarding apostates from Christianity becoming sole heirs of their relatives 352

'Nationalist' movement in the Carmelite convent in Goa encouraged by Portuguese authorities—Fr. John of Christ, appointed Apostolic Visitor and sent out from Portugal, makes many changes and innovations—the Italian Vicar Provincial sent away from Goa—Definitory General in Rome protest, and commission of the Apostolic Visitor revoked, 1646—mission posts in Persia lose financial aid of Goa, and reduced to straits—most of premises at Shiraz sold—in 1656 the site of the Residence sold, another bought—the Bull of Pope Alexander VII, and administrative and financial control of the missions in Persia and their endowment taken over by Sac. Congregation de Prop. Fide, 1656, to regret of Carmelites—the Carmelite organization in the Mission, and numbers at this time—changed relations with schismatic Armenians, proposals to bring pressure on them through their compatriots in Europe—the Sarrati (Shariman) family make a profession of Catholic Faith, 1646—Fr. (afterwards Bishop) Piromalli, O.P.'s forcible methods of combating Armenian schism in Julfa—Carmelite attempt to establish a hospice in Julfa, 1652—arrival of the first Jesuit Fathers, 1653—outbreak by schismatics against Latin missionaries, and Carmelites have to withdraw from Julfa, 1654—correspondence of Armenian patriarchs with Rome 367

Brief history of previous attitude of Chaldaeans round Urmieh to the Holy See—Fr. Dionysius visits their patriarch, and sends report to Rome—Fr. Ferdinand Gioerida sent out, 1654, by the Sac. Cong. de Prop. Fide with letters to this Chaldaean patriarch, Mar Shimun, inviting his submission, but is drowned on the way—the patriarch writes to the Pope—subsequent history of this branch—Fr. Dionysius also visits the other Chaldaean branch and patriarch, Mar Elias, near Mausil, 1654—his report on them—interest of the Sac. Cong. de Prop. Fide in the Kalmaks in NE. Persia—Fr. Dionysius' special work of baptizing moribund children of Muslims, and questions raised regarding it—figures of such baptisms—nomination of Fr. Dionysius as Bishop of Agra rejected by him 382

Proposals to establish a Carmelite Residence at Kung—activities of other Orders in this period—the Capuchins, Jesuits—Bishop Bernard of S. Teresa of Baghdad's retirement in France, sale of episcopal premises in Isfahan—appointment of Dom Placid du Chemin, O.S.B., as coadjutor Bishop of Baghdad, 1661—difficulties with him 398

Inauguration of relations between French and Persian Courts—a Polish ambassador—arrival of the English Viscount Bellomont, a royalist emissary—John Chardin in Persia—interest of 'Abbas II in European painters, and painting—his death 403

REIGN OF SHAH SULAIMAN

Ill health of the new king—his description in later life by Père Sanson—his character and supineness in governing—his chief Wazir, a bigot, persecutes Armenians—their entering Isfahan city prohibited—the Shah has the chief Rabbi of the Jews and others publicly killed—his profligacy at the expense of the Armenians 405

The 'Frank' or Uniat Armenians of Nakhchiwan, their previous history and numbers—the decree of 'Abbas I in favour of Armenian apostates, enforced in the district, does much harm—Pope Clement X's Brief in favour of these Armenians—the Uniat Armenian archbishop

Arakhiel finds his way to England, is furnished with a letter of recommendation by Charles II—another Brief of Clement X to Shah Sulaiman regarding Nakhchiwan—reply of Shah Sulaiman—visit of Mgr Picquet to the district, and his report—Pope Clement requests the Shah to take the district under his direct administration

410

The Turks again become militant in Europe and take Crete—Pope Innocent XI exhorts Christian princes to ally, and sends envoys to Shah Sulaiman urging him to take the opportunity and attack the Turks—after repulse of the Turks before Vienna, 1683, 'privileges' accorded by the Persian Court to the Carmelites—Pope Innocent XI's Brief of 1683 to Shah Sulaiman against the Turks—and Shah Sulaiman's reply—a further Brief and reply regarding a building at Shamakha—a Polish embassy ends indecorously—in the Persian Gulf—appearance of French first in Indian waters, then in the Gulf, 1672—the Portuguese position, and their stake in the port of Kung—vicissitudes of the mission at Basra—ceremonial at visits, and practice at custom houses in Mesopotamia

419

Death in Paris of Bishop Bernard of Baghdad—Bishop du Chemin delays proceeding to his post, his eccentricities—asks for the title of patriarch, and the pallium—Fr. François Picquet nominated to administer the diocese of Baghdad as Vicar Apostolic, 1674—travels via Nakhchiwan, where he arrived 1681—his letters, and reception by the Shah—applies for a coadjutor and invites Père Pidou de St. Olon to join him—Bishop Picquet takes up residence at Hamadan, dies 1685—Fr. Pidou appointed bishop, 1687, his movements and financial troubles—his consecration, 1694, as Bishop of Baghdad—request of 'Uniat' Armenians for appointment of a Bishop of Isfahan, and manner of Fr. Elias' selection—the Shariman family

428

The Carmelite Mission, its distribution and numbers in this period—insufficiency of funds and workers—attitude of Definitory General in Rome—debts of the mission posts—Christian trading methods—receipts and expenditure from Cacurri endowment—burden of hospitality to travellers at Basra—at Shiraz hard times suffered—visits of Carmelites to Gāmburun (Bandar 'Abbas) begin 1667—they stay with the agent of the French Royal Company—the Carmelite mission in Malabar—inconveniences of system of election of Procurators, and of Priors of Isfahan—inactivity at the convent at Isfahan—exaggeration in reports of results (by other missionaries)

439

Brief history of Christianity among the Armenians, and their varying attitude towards obedience to Rome—gradual splitting of ecclesiastical government into several seats of Katholikos and patriarchates—re-creation of Echmiadzin as main centre—their creed and differences of dogma—Fr. Elias of S. Albert takes up vigorously reconciliation of the schismatics to the Holy See—his letters about the way he managed to take up residence in Julfa—reaction of the schismatics to progress made in teaching—Fr. Elias and the Shariman hauled before Muslim tribunal by schismatics—chapel for the Armenian rite allotted by the Shariman, 1681, and another chapel for the Latin rite, 1691, opened at Julfa—the Vartapet Stephen and other schismatics complain to the Shah about proselytism by Fr. Elias, 1692—reinforced numbers of Carmelites—narrative by Fr. Elias of the resistance offered to his building a new church in Julfa, riotous behaviour—bribery of the 'Queen-mother' and Muslim officials, and edict of expulsion of the Carmelites from Julfa, 1694—retribution on those responsible

450

REIGN OF SHAH SULTAN HUSAIN, AND OF THE AFGHANS, SHAH MAHMUD AND SHAH ASHRAF

Strange circumstances attending the selection or succession of Shah Sultan Husain, his bodily imperfections, and habits—his uxoriousness, dominated by the Court eunuchs—extravagance and the strict precautions to prevent men from approaching the Shah when he was on tour—the date of the burning of the first Chihil Situn, and description of paintings in it—the Shah, a devotee to Shiah tenets, led to order forced circumcision of Zoroastrians (Gabrs) and seeks to treat the Armenians similarly

470

Fr. Elias tries to obtain from the Court revocation of the order for the expulsion of the Carmelites from Julfa, but outbidden by the schismatics—his suggestion for pressure to be brought on the Armenians in Europe—outrageous conduct of the Vartapet Stephen—Fr. Elias has his consecration as bishop postponed to a more favourable time—Brief of complaint from Pope Innocent XIII, 1695, asking for the readmission of the Carmelites to Julfa, delivered by the Portuguese envoy—Fr. Conrad brings from the Emperor and the king of Poland requests for justice to be done to the Carmelites against Armenian misrepresentations—Fr. Elias consecrated—the Shah permits the return to Julfa, the triumphal re-entry—the Vartapet Stephen intrigues and has the Katholikos Nahapiet of Echmiadzin deposed, himself appointed instead—the fate of Stephen—the schismatics continue in Julfa and Georgia and elsewhere to treat the Uniats ill—the case of the money of J. B. Tavernier and the Shariman—the latter transfer funds to escape sequestration—apostasy of some of the family—in Nakhchiwan persecution by schismatics causes sufferers to appeal to the Pope—the dispatch of the Archbishop of Ancyra as Apostolic Visitor to Persia, his antecedents—the ceremonies on his arrival—owing to a diplomatic dispute of the Persian Court with the Muscovite Agent special procedure adopted for the presentation by the archbishop of letters from sovereigns—the banquet after his audience—the Archbishop of Ancyra bewails the exploitation by Persian officials of his travelling allowances—gifts brought for the Shah—his commission to treat with the Armenians, who, however, prove obdurate, and the Shah's prohibition of the cursing of Pope S. Leo by them—the Archbishop suggests pressure be brought on the Armenians in the Papal and other States—the Bishop of Isfahan's recommendation to the Doge of Venice on similar lines—list of royal decrees in favour of the Christians obtained by the Archbishop—Pope Innocent XII's Brief to Shah Sultan Husain, 30.4.1695—Turkish military pressure in Europe—attitude of the Shah and his chief Wazir to the urging by the Pope of common action against the Turks—the Czar's chief minister in Moscow destroys the letters sent to Europe by the Persian Court—Basra and the Persian occupation, 1697–1701—departure from Persia and death at Surat of the archbishop of Ancyra—a Capuchin Religious sent to Persia from Rome as an Envoy, his reception at Isfahan . . .

474

The unfulfilled promises of the Shariman brothers to provide an endowment fund for the support of the Bishop of Isfahan, and his financial embarrassments in consequence—other motives for a journey of Bp. Elias to Rome—Fr. Conrad dispatched to Europe again—Bishop Elias quits Isfahan, 14.10.1699—his protracted journey as far as Moscow, interview with Prince Galitzin, chief minister of the Czar—he is 'confined' to his quarters, then sent via Kiew—the rest of his negotiations in Poland, Austria and Venice—extracts from his address to the Doge of Venice—he reaches Rome, April 1702—objectives of his visit, and his detailed representation of his needs, financial and other to the Pope and Sac. Cong. de Prop. Fide—Bishop Elias leaves Rome, 25.5.1705—Brief of Pope Clement XI to Shah Sultan Husain requests protection for the Christians in Persia—and dispatch of further gifts—Bishop Elias takes charge of diocese of Antwerp for a time, lands and dies at Bahia in Brazil on his return voyage to Persia—the outcome of his activities among the Armenians . . .

499

Conditions at the four Carmelite mission posts in this reign, irregularity of supply of funds—accounts of disbursements from the Cacurri endowment fund—losses of the Carmelites through the failure of the French East India Company—losses in numbers of the Religious, reduced to two alone in 1716—fresh dispatch of missionaries from Italy, 1715—work at the several posts described, the baptizing of moribund Muslims—the French envoy, M. Michel, 1708, obtains orders for repairs to the convent to be done at the expense of the Shah's treasury—consecration at Hamadan of Fr. Peter of Alcantara—Mgr Maurice of S. Teresa, Vicar Apostolic for the Mogul's dominions, in Persia, 1711—the position at Goa, and expulsion of the Carmelites from the Portuguese dominions (1709)—their settlement on Bombay island—Mgr Maurice applies to Rome for the separation of Bombay, as being English territory, from the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Goa, and put under the Carmelites—the oath required by the East India Company to be taken by Mgr Maurice—to teach the Roman Catholic Faith in all its purity . . .

513

Hostility of the Armenian schismatics continues after the departure of Bishop Elias—in Tabriz, in Tiflis—persecution of the Catholics and missionaries—the bastinadoing of the Katholikos Alexander—orders obtained from the Shah to chastise the persecuting Armenians in Georgia—intrigues of the Katholikos Alexander for the expulsion of the Latin missionaries—and in Turkey he was a principal cause of the persecution of the Uniat—in 1701 and 1712 Capuchins at Baghdad have to abandon their mission, destroyed by the Turks on schismatic misrepresentation—bastinadoing of the Uniat notables in Julfa, 1713—death of the Katholikos Alexander, the great persecutor—at Tabriz a Capuchin Religious killed in the assault of the city by the Turkish army, and all Catholic Armenians put to the sword—the great earthquake in Tabriz—expostulations from the Pope and Christian sovereigns produce, 1722, an order from the Shah for the punishment of the patriarch, and rebuilding of premises destroyed

521

Bishop Pidou of Baghdad, resident in Hamadan, comes to Isfahan, appeals to Rome for financial aid and to be allowed to reside at Aleppo—he returns to Hamadan, 1696, summoned to Isfahan by the Archbishop of Ancyra as Apostolic Visitor—asks for privileges to pontificate, 1700, granted for 3 years, and for a coadjutor, and for exchange of diocesan territory—Hamadan for Basra—Bishop Elias' qualified assent, 1702—Bishop Pidou allowed to remain in Hamadan a further three years, 1702—Mgr de Galiczen appointed coadjutor, 1707—narrative by Bishop Pidou of the sending of M. Fabre, the envoy from France, and of his own journey to Tabriz in connection with this, and the arrival of M. Michel—arrival of Mgr de Galiczen in Persia—decrees said to have been issued by the Court, at his instance, to protect the Catholics against schismatic malice—he dies, 1712—Bishop Pidou appointed consul for France, returns to Isfahan and has audience of the Shah—Persian discontent with the French East India company—Bishop Pidou, an inmate of the Carmelite convent, becomes paralysed—Bishop de la Flèche appointed coadjutor but evades the journey to the East—death of Mgr Pidou, 1717—list of his letters in the archives of Propaganda Fide—letter of king Louis Quatorze, 1714, to Pope Clement XI about the missions in Persia—appointment of M. Gardanne as consul for France, 1715—incidents attending his journey at Aleppo—his reception in Persia—a rising against the Shah in Isfahan—relations of the French Court with the Persian Court at this time—the French Company—manœuvres by the Seminaire at Paris to get Persia added to the jurisdiction of the French bishops of Baghdad—the Sacr. Cong. de Prop. Fide decides to appoint a Dominican as Vicar Apostolic for the diocese of Isfahan—Fr. Barnabas Fedeli, O.P., of Milan—position of the Dominicans in Julfa at this time, they are favoured by the Sacr. Congregation—the Dominican buildings at Julfa—their archbishops in Nakhchiwan—Fr. Barnabas Fedeli's journey from Venice to Julfa, 1711—he is nominated Bishop of Isfahan, 1716—his consecration—his defects as a writer on contemporary events—Fr. D. M. Varlet appointed Bishop of Baghdad to succeed Mgr Pidou, 1718—becomes a Jansenist and stopped from reaching the diocese—administration of the premises at Hamadan of the Bishops of Baghdad handed over to the Carmelites, 1720—expenditure on them—Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, appointed Vicar Apostolic for diocese of Baghdad, 1721, arrives Basra, 1722—the French consul makes the Jesuit church in Julfa his official chapel, and has a dispute with the Bishop over prayers for the king—further difficulties of Bishop Fedeli with the Jesuits—he uses Fr. Krusinski as his messenger to the Persian Court at Qazwin—description of the audience and banquet attended by Bishop Fedeli—'Itimad-ud-Dauleh blinded by Shah Sultan Husain—the intrigues against the former—list of expenses of presenting the Pope's letters to the Shah—Shah Sultan Husain hands over replies for the Pope and Emperor—the edicts obtained for repairs to the missions in Tiflis and Ganjeh—a letter from Louis Quinze to the Shah in favour of the Catholics of Nakhchiwan—Fr. Jerome Francis obtains in France endowment of a fund for the upkeep of the Carmelite mission in Julfa—his return to Persia as envoy from the Emperor—and entry into Isfahan described

530

The Afghan invasion of Persia—the policy of the Shahs in Georgi aand Armenia, and its evil results—appointment of Gurji Khan as governor of Kandahar, the intrigues of Mir Wais, Kalantar of Kandahar against him—the strange case of Israil Ori, the Armenian adventurer, and the alarm it caused the Persian Court with regard to Russia—Mir Wais, successful in his intrigues and back in Kandahar, has the Georgian commander and his force put to death—Khusru Khan sent to replace Gurji Khan with a composite force of Georgians and Persians—the desire of this Georgian chief to be recognized as a Catholic—he takes the Carmelite Fr.

Basil as his chaplain on his march to Kandahar—both are slain in a rout of the besieging force by the Kandaharis, 1711—an account of the march on Isfahan of Mahmud, son of Mir Wais, and the Afghans, from the narratives of Fr. du Cerceau and of the Carmelite Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia combined—surrender of Isfahan and usurpation of the throne by Mir Mahmud, 1722—events following the occupation of Isfahan—attempts of Shah Mahmud to master the rest of Persia—he puts to death Safawi princes—Shah Mahmud assassinated, April 1725—Mir Ashraf succeeds as Shah—his campaigns against the Turks—Fr. John Joseph at Hamadan moulds a cannon for the Persians, is captured, made a slave and ransomed—more Turkish invasions, and negotiations with Shah Ashraf—Shah Sultan Husain put to death, 1729—Hasan Quli, later to become Nadir Shah, joins the Safawi prince Tahmasp and drives Shah Ashraf from Isfahan to Shiraz and Kirman—Shah Ashraf killed in the desert of Baluchistan—the situation of the Carmelite and other missions in Julfa during and after the siege, cut off for years from communication with Baghdad, and Europe—their straits through non-receipt of funds, famine prices—their complaints of abandonment by the Orders in Europe—the Carmelite Residence at Shiraz collapses, massacres there and ill-treatment of the Carmelites—recrudescence of malice of the schismatics—attitude of the Afghan Shahs to the Armenians—at Hamadan also Armenian schismatics move the Turks to expel the Latin Missionaries—a letter from the French ambassador at Constantinople, 1725, to the Carmelite Vicar Apostolic about Hamadan—in succession to the latter, appointment of Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert as pro-Vicar Apostolic for the diocese of Baghdad, 1728—grave straits of Bishop Fedeli of Isfahan, 1727-30

562

REIGNS OF SHAH TAHMASP II (SAFAWI), 'ABBAS III (SAFAWI), AND NADIR SHAH (AFSHAR)

Dearth of letters from Religious working within Persia at this period—the enigma of these eighteen years to the student of the missions—Shah Tahmasp and his operations against the Turkish armies—his general, Tahmasp Quli Khan, has him deposed, 1730—proclamation of the infant 'Abbas III—Tahmasp Quli Khan besieges Baghdad ineffectually—an account of the Turco-Persian fighting—Tahmasp Quli Khan proceeds to the Caucasus—the Turks defeated, peace made—Tahmasp Quli Khan's unsatisfactory relations with the European 'East India' Companies—his attack on Basra fails partly through the assistance afforded by the English Resident to the Turks—in 1736 Tahmasp Quli Khan becomes Shah—his campaign against the Lurs, and setting out to invest Kandahar, 1737—the killing of Shah Tahmasp II—Nadir Shah invades India—the curious incident of the attack on his life—he has his son, Riza Quli, blinded—the Capuchin Fr. Damian's letters of 1742 about Nadir Shah's health and the losses of his troops in the operations in Daghistan

594

Bishop Fedeli, O.P., of Isfahan starts on a visit *ad limina*, but dies at Shiraz, 1731—selection in Rome of Fr. D. Salvini, O.P., as Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, and of the Carmelite Fr. Philip Mary as Bishop of Isfahan, 1732—survey of the Carmelites left in Persia, 1736-45, and the members of the Catholic community—abandonment of the mission at Shiraz, 1738—a mission settlement at Bushire—the position at Bandar 'Abbas—and at Hamadan repairs effected to the premises, but in 1744 Bishop Emmanuel proposes to cede these to the Carmelites of Isfahan—work at Basra—exigencies of the French consul, M. Martainville—Fr. Emmanuel in 1730 obtains French official protection for the missionaries at Baghdad, and buys a site for a chapel and house there, 1731—the schismatics instigate the Pasha to arrest him and seize the house of the missionaries—the king of France appoints Fr. Emmanuel consul for France—plague in Mesopotamia—Fr. Emmanuel promoted to be Bishop of Baghdad, 1742, and is consecrated at Malta—Carmelite missionaries at Mardin, Mausil, Diarbakr, Kirkuk—the Sacr. Cong. de Prop. Fide delegate Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia and other Carmelites to Upper Mesopotamia, 1747, for work among the Chaldaeans in particular—in Nakhchiwan the Turkish forces slay a number of Dominicans and ravage the district—Pope Clement XI writes to Nadir Shah in favour of the Uniate—the community in Nakhchiwan send a representative to Nadir Shah's Court—'farmans' issued but remain a dead letter as regards ill-treatment and extortion—part of the population emigrate—Tabriz placed temporarily under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan—but in 1746 the latter with most of his flock migrate to Smyrna—cruelties and oppression by tax-gatherers and soldiers in Nakhchiwan, so that few Catholics remain

610

The Katholikos of the Armenians—animosity of Lazar against the Catholics, and revival in Persia of violence by the schismatics—intrigues with the Persian Court—the Bishop of Isfahan sends delegates to appeal to the Shah for protection—narrative of the religious disputation in the presence of Nadir Shah’s son—translation of the Gospels into Persian ordered by Nadir Shah, Bishop Philip Mary’s part in this—the Sacr. Cong. de Prop. Fide subsidize expenses of the translation, etc.—Nadir Shah’s notion about making an official religion—the scene when the translators of the Gospels, Old Testament, Quran, presented the fruits of their labours to the Shah described—Nadir Shah allows liberty of creed in Julfa—in Aleppo also revocation of a decree of expulsion against a Uniat bishop and others—punishment of the schismatic patriarch—description of the sites of the Latin convents in Isfahan and Julfa by Fr. Leander—replies to the questionnaires from the Sacr. Cong. on the missions, and on the schismatic churches at Julfa and elsewhere—Bishop Philip Mary of Isfahan dies, 1749 631

Nadir Shah reopens hostilities against the Turks—siege of Basra and blockade of Baghdad—an armistice, but the Turkish Court at Constantinople decline to ratify peace—Nadir Shah lays waste Nakhchiwan district and other border regions—he then marches to suppress a revolt in Sistan—his arrival in Isfahan, 1745, and narrative of his cruel extortions from the inhabitants—he has two Armenian gentlemen, two Zoroastrians and four Jews, after an eye put out from each, burnt alive in the Maidan of Isfahan—he is assassinated, June 1747 646

THE INTERREGNUM AS FAR AS 1780

The contested succession—triangular contest between Azad Khan Afghan, Muhammad Hasan Khan Qajar, Karim Khan Zand—the Bakhtiari assault and sack Isfahan, 1751—risks of travel—the Christians fly from the country—the Afghans in possession of Isfahan, 1753, take up quarters in the Augustinian convent—the mulcting of Latin missionaries in impositions—Hamadan ruined and almost deserted—East India Company reports as to the contest for power between the rival chieftains in S. Persia—the Safawi prince Isma’il made a puppet Shah—the Afghan Azad Khan finally defeated, 1757—Karim Khan Zand left in possession of control over eight provinces—a period of comparative quiet till 1763—but the Catholic Armenians do not return to Julfa—removal of the Factories of the European ‘East India’ Companies from Bandar ‘Abbas—report of Mgr Cornelius of S. Joseph on the political condition of Persia, 1765—Karim Khan’s character—Sulaiman K’ab—Mir Muhanna the pirate, who drove the Dutch from Kharg Island, 1766, details described—discord between Karim Khan Zand and the agents of the English ‘East India’ Company at Bushire leads to the latter withdrawing from Bushire to Basra, 1767, and the Carmelite mission following them in 1769—Karim Khan’s policy towards Europeans—the manner in which Mir Muhanna became prominent, and of his being put to death at Basra, 1769—a report of 1772 by Mgr Cornelius of S. Joseph on the political situation in, and division of Persia among several rulers—numbers of refugees from Persia still abroad—Karim Khan’s policy—a reason ascribed for the withdrawal of the English Company to Basra—in his last years Karim Khan goes to war with the Turks—Basra is besieged, and then looted and occupied by a Persian force, 1777 656

The Afghans ravage Nakhchiwan, and destroy churches and convents, 1752—reports of Archbishop Salvini on conditions in the archdiocese, 1753 and 1758—only seven out of thirty-five Dominicans surviving—majority of the Catholic inhabitants settle in Smyrna district—resignation and death of Archbishop Salvini, his tomb in S. Sabina, Rome 674

Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret appointed Bishop of Isfahan, 1750, consecrated in Baghdad, does not return to Persia, but granted permission to reside temporarily at Basra—his proposal for an exchange of Hamadan for Basra—rejected by Bishop Emmanuel of Baghdad—protest by the latter to the French ministers—Mgr Sebastian, and his brother, the Vicar General, at Bushire for a few months, 1753, but return to Basra—his death, 1755—inventory of his effects—as his successor the Sacr. Cong. propose, and the Pope approves Fr. Cornelius of S. Joseph—gifts of literary style in the latter—captured by a corsair, is landed in Sardinia and there

consecrated, 1759—the question of his oath of residence—his permanent dwelling on Kharg island barred by the Dutch Company—a narrative of Baron Kniphausen's occupation of the island of Kharg for the Dutch 'East India' Company—the Company allow the Carmelites to build a chapel and Residence for Catholic missionaries on Kharg—Mgr Cornelius establishes himself, 1765, at Bushire, where the Carmelites keep a house till about 1770—resignation of Bishop Cornelius, 1770—Bishop Emmanuel of Baghdad appointed to look after the diocese, but resigns this duty, 1771—the Nestorian patriarch, Mgr Élias, has a public profession of Catholic Faith made at Baghdad, 1771—quarantine practice at Naples, etc.—Fr. John, son of Aratun, retires to Baghdad with a remnant of Catholics from Julfa 678

Carmelites at Julfa in this period—proposals of Bishop Cornelius for settlement of missionaries in future include Carmelite houses at Julfa and Shiraz—their post at Basra bereft of a Father, 1799, and only two Religious left in the Middle East 699

The Jesuits depart from Julfa, 1757—their General cedes their mission at Rasht to the Capuchins, 1764—the Capuchins at Tabriz and Tiflis—at Rasht—Don Emmanuel Caro, a strange figure, settles in Gilan as a priest, and then moves to Shiraz, 1777—the Dominicans at Julfa—Mgr Cornelius' reports of 1765 give the numbers of Catholics at divers places in Persia—persecution of the Catholics by the schismatics, 1765—in substitution of the Dominicans the Sacr. Cong. de Prop. Fide appoint two Armenians, ex-students of the Urban College, to Julfa, but discord with the former arises—Mgr Cornelius and others recommend that the Armenian priest should not be left in sole responsibility in Julfa—reports by the Armenian administrator, Fr. John, son of Aratun, to the Sacr. Cong., 1776–7—he retires to Baghdad and dies there—a final statement of the Catholic position and numbers about 1806 702

Part II

GOVERNMENT OF THE MISSION TO PERSIA AND THE INDIES

Rule and Constitutions of the Carmelite Order, and periodical elections of its *Curia*—provinces, priors, visitations—cosmopolitan composition of its Mission to Persia—geographical distribution of provinces of the missionaries—list of Vicars Provincial for Persia and the Indies constructed from data in correspondence, and evidence on which the list is based—Visitors General—circumstances and scope of visitations—their 'Ordinances' to the missionaries—the 'Instructions' given them by the Praepositus Generals of the Order—list of Visitors General reaching Persia, on evidence in correspondence—Priors of the convent at Isfahan—manner of their election—their list as reconstructed from correspondence—excerpts from the *Regesta* of the proceedings of the Definitory General in Rome regarding the Missions (i.e. their 'Instructions' and decisions) 722

FINANCING OF THE MISSION IN PERSIA, ETC.

Alms, etc., in Persia, a Muslim country, insufficient to maintain the missionaries—the legacy of Baron Francesco Cimini di Caccuri, 1605—decision of the Order to found a Seminary—defective and irregular payment of the fund after his death—fresh composition by his heirs—on what the yield of the money was secured—various sites of the missionary seminary in Rome (now at S. Pancrazio)—early difficulties in remitting subsidies to Isfahan—subsequent reliance of the Convent in Isfahan on Goa and the Convent there to make up what was needed in Persia—the Residence at Shiraz, temporarily closed for want of sufficient funds—'Instructions' to mission posts in India to support the necessitous convent of Isfahan—sale of part of premises in Shiraz—proposals for a capital sum to be administered locally in Persia, and to suffice for the various Residences—changed financial situation after administration of Missions is taken over

xviii	<i>A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia</i>	PAGE
effectively by the Sacr. Cong. de Prop. Fide, 1656—the Cacurri legacy invested in Roman Monti di Pietà—rates fixed for stipends and travelling allowances—reduced capital and income from Luoghi di Monti—assignment to each Residence, in Syria as well as Persia, of annual sums—but irregularity in dispatch and receipt of annual stipends proves a severe handicap on maintaining adequate numbers of missionaries—imprudent local investment of savings—and indebtedness of the Convent at Isfahan—list of revenues derived in Rome and Paris, 1721—large portion of Cacurri endowment fund used in the Seminary in Rome—breakdown for several years of remittances during the Afghan invasion, and impoverishment of missions and bishop—failure to redeem the Convent at Isfahan and Residences mortgaged, or to have repairs done .	757	
COINAGES, AND EXCHANGE VALUES, mentioned in the correspondence, etc.	773	

Part III

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF THE CARMELITE RELIGIOUS MENTIONED AS HAVING BEEN IN PERSIA BETWEEN 1600-1775

Sources from which compiled—enumeration of the few lists of professed or dead Religious at present available in Europe for the centuries concerned	781
For the names of 166 Religious, of whom notices are given, see the alphabetical list at the beginning of this part.	

Part IV

SITES, CONSTRUCTION, VICISSITUDES AND DURATION OF EACH SEPARATE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DISCALCED CARMELITES IN THEIR MISSIONARY PROVINCE, 'PERSIA AND THE INDIES'

(A) In Persia proper

(a) Missions integrally complete with permanent residence, priest-Religious, and church	
ISFAHAN, the Convent at	1028
HURMUZ, the Residence at	1040
SHIRAZ, the Residence at	1056
JULFA, the Residence at	1072
KHARG, the Residence on	1087
(b) Semi-missions, i.e. without permanent residence, church, priest-Religious, or not belonging to, or administered for the Order:	
BANDAR 'ABBAS	1097
BUSHIRE	1101
HAMADAN	1104
(c) Proposed mission, never effective:	
KUNG	1114

(B) In Mesopotamia

Mission integrally complete, with permanent residence, priest-Religious and church:	
BASRA	1122

Contents

xix

(C) *In Western India*

PAGE

Missions integrally complete, with permanent residence, priest-Religious and church:

TATTA in Sind, the Residence at	1218
GOA, the Convent at	1222
DIU, the Residence at	1246

(D) <i>The House owned at MASQAT</i>	1249
--	------

(E) <i>Notes on the Residence at BAGHDAD</i>	1250
--	------

(F) <i>Notes on Carmelite and other Missionary enterprise in the rest of MESOPOTAMIA</i>	1261
--	------

APPENDIXES

(A) LATIN BRIEFS (of most of which translation is given in the text)

(a) From the Popes to Shahs of Persia	1272
(b) From the Popes to other personages, and to Carmelite missionaries	1321
(c) From Charles II of England to Shah Sulaiman	1346

(B) PERSIAN LETTERS from Shahs of Persia to the Popes: typed transliterations of the photographed originals (translations in the text)	1347
--	------

(C) NOTE on the Shariman family of Julfa, Venice and Leghorn, leading Armenian Catholics of the original community in Julfa	1358
---	------

(D) MAP showing mission posts of the Discalced Carmelites in the East, and places mentioned in this Chronicle	1362
---	------

facing

INDEX	1363
-----------------	------

ILLUSTRATIONS

	<i>Facing page</i>
Fr. Peter Thomas of the Queen of Carmel, Praepositus General of the Order of Discalced Carmelites	vi
His Eminence Cardinal Raphael Charles Rossi, O.C.D. (from the Etrurian Province of the Order), Cardinal Protector of the Order of Discalced Carmelites	vi
His Eminence Cardinal Adeodatus John Piazza, O.C.D. (from the Venetian Province of the Order), Cardinal Patriarch of Venice	vi
Pope Clement VIII	10
Letter of 1604 from Shah' Abbas I to Pope Clement VIII (Vatican Library, Rome). For reproduction in Persian typescript, see Appendix B	94
Letter of Shah 'Abbas I to Pope Clement VIII, of 1604 (Vatican Library, Rome). For reproduction in Persian typescript see Appendix B	95
Seal on the reverse of the two letters of Shah 'Abbas I of 1604. For translation see p. 95, and for reproduction in Persian typescript see Appendix B	95
Pope Paul V (Camillo Borghese), 1605-21. Bust in the Royal Borghese Gallery, Rome, by Bernini. (Alinari photo)	112
Fr. Paul Simon of Jesus Mary, O.C.D., Leader and Superior of the first Carmelite expedition and mission to Persia. Later elected the seventh Praepositus General of the Order, 6.5.1623; re-elected, the tenth, 5.5.1632; re-elected, the thirteenth, 21.4.1641	127
Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig (Zainul Khan), Envoy from 'Abbas I to the Emperor Rudolf. Engraving in the Department of the Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, of the painting from life by E. Sadeler. Prague. By permission of the Trustees	169
The great "Maidan", i.e. the square of Isfahan, with the Masjid-i-Shah the celebrated mosque, built by 'Abbas I, the A'ala Kapi Palace to the right	189
The Emperor Matthias addresses Shah 'Abbas I, 1614, recommending the Carmelite, Fr. Benignus of St. Michael. In the archives of the Order, Rome	209
'Farman', i.e. decree of September 1615 by Shah 'Abbas I, directing that Fr. Redempt of the Cross, O.C.D., should accompany Sir Robert Sherley on a mission to the sovereigns of Europe. In the archives of the Order, Rome	217
Autographed endorsement by the celebrated traveller and writer, Pietro della Valle, "il Pellegrino", to an assignment by Mr. George Strachan of the Mearns, Scotland, dated Isfahan, 26.9.1621, of his oriental 'books' to the Carmelites for conveyance to Europe. In the archives of the Order, Rome	236
Khudabandeh Mirza. A miniature in the Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, London (No. 1920-9-17-013 (24), by the Indian artist Bishndas, who went to Persia with the embassy from the Mogul Court and painted it before 1619. By permission of the Trustees	257
Pope Urban VIII (Maffeo Barberini), by Pietro da Cortona in the Capitoline Gallery, Rome. (Alinari photo)	272
A 'Commission' issued by the newly created Congregation de Propaganda Fide (it is signed by Cardinal Ludovisi, the first Prefect, and by Mgr Franc. Ingoli, the first Secretary and is a rare example of that date), dated 22.1.1624, to the Carmelite Frs. Cyprian of S. Mary, Elisaeus of S. Andrew, John of Jesus Mary, Eustace of the Most Holy Sacrament, for work in Basra and Arabia. In the archives of the Order, Rome	275
Shah 'Abbas I. A miniature in the Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, London (No. 1920-9-17-013 (2))—Mogul school of painting, about 1618, by the Indian painter Bishndas, who was sent to Persia with the embassy from the Emperor Jahangir. By permission of the Trustees	285

	<i>Facing page</i>
Bishop John Thaddaeus of S. Elisaeus, O.C.D., first Bishop of Isfahan, from a painting in the Carmelite Convent of S. Anne at Genoa	300
Shah 'Abbas II. A miniature at the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington. By permission of the Director	353
"The Arabs have taken Masqat" from the Portuguese, 1649: how the news was given by Fr. Felix of S. Antony, O.C.D. In the archives of the Order, Rome	358
Shah 'Abbas II. An engraving (initialled D. C.) in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, Cabinet des Estampes	366
Shah Sulaiman. A miniature in the collection of A. Chester Beatty, Esq. By his kind permission	405
Letter from Shah Sulaiman to Pope Clement X of 1673, regarding the treatment of Christians in Azarbajan province. By permission of the Prefect of the Vatican Archives. (AA. Arm. I-XVIII, No. 761)	415
Seal of Shah Sulaiman, dated 1078 A.H.—1667 A.D. on the back of his letter of 1673 to Pope Clement X	416
Seal of Shah Sulaiman, dated 1091 A.H.—1680 A.D. on the back of his letters of 1684–5 to Pope Innocent XI	416
Letter from Shah Sulaiman to Pope Innocent XI, of 1684–5, regarding his attitude towards the Turks By permission of the Prefect of the Vatican Archives. (AA. Arm. I-XVIII, No. 1737)	423
Letter from Shah Sulaiman to Pope Innocent XI, of 1685 (?) regarding the house of Shamakha. By permission of the Prefect of the Vatican Archives. (AA. Arm. I-XVIII, No. 1737a)	424
Shah Sultan Husain—reproduced from the engraving in <i>Travels into Muscovy and Persia</i> , by M. Cornelius Le Bruyn, 1737, in the Department of Oriental Books and MSS., 10003 f.p., British Museum, "le roy Hoseen" facing p. 211 By permission of the Trustees	470
Interior and exterior of the church of the Dominicans at Julfa, first erected 1697, and now used by the Catholic Armenians. Taken 1933 during a May when the painting of S. Dominic over the altar is hidden by the statue of the Blessed Virgin, and drapery	547
Bishop Barnabas Fedeli, O.P., fourth Bishop of Isfahan, from a painting in the possession of the Dominican Order, Rome	549
Nadir Shah, the Afshar. A miniature in the Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum. By permission of the Trustees	605
Tombstone at Shiraz, dated 12.7.1672, of Habib Gioerida, a relative of the first wife of Pietro della Valle, from the old burial ground of the Catholics in Shiraz	614
At Julfa, the vineyard known as "The Garden of the Jesuits", the ruined building is all that remains of their establishment (1933)	718
Fr. Eugenius of S. Benedict, O.C.D., Visitor General to Persia and the Indies, 1624–7, elected the fourteenth Praepositus General of the Order, 16.4.1644	879
Fr. Philip of the Most Holy Trinity, O.C.D., later elected the twenty-first Praepositus General of the Order, 25.4.1665	992
Reproduction from Olearius's work of a general view before 1650 of Isfahan and Julfa, indicating the situation of the Convent of the Carmelites and that of the Augustinians in Isfahan city	1032
General view over Shiraz and its valley from the Allah-hu-Akbar pass, taken from the Quran gate	1056
At Julfa, the vineyard called still "The Garden of the Carmelites"; no trace of buildings now remaining (1933)	1086
Interior and exterior of the existing (1938) church and presbytery of the Carmelites at Bushire	1103
Basra, interior of the present church of the Carmelites	1214
Masqat, the Portuguese fortress	1249

This opportunity is taken to acknowledge obligation to Mr. Basil Gray of the Department of the Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, through whose courteous interest it has been possible to bring together these portraits of the Shahs.

ABBREVIATIONS

- O.C.D.** (Order of Carmelites Discalced: Latin form) quoted from letters and documents in manuscript in the archives of the Casa Generalizia of the Order in Rome. When followed by numbers and initials, these latter signify the present classification marks in the archives. The name of a Religious preceding "O.C.D.", and the classification marks indicates that he was the writer: and the date that of the letter or document quoted.
- S.R.** From the manuscript series *Scritture Riferite* in the archives of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide ('*Sacr. Cong.*' for short), being papers "referred" to the Congregation of Cardinals in their *general* sessions ('regular' or 'plenary', as such assemblies would more often be called in English). The numbers are those of the *volumes* in that series and, when added, the page in the volume. For the years 1669 to 1760, though by no means exhaustively or completely, some three hundred and seventy volumes, 418 to 788 (which contain correspondence from or about missions in *all parts* of the world by sequence of receipt, mixed, e.g. a paper from China next to one about Ruthenians, between letters from Ireland and Persia), have been examined for references to the Carmelite mission in Persia. From the foundation of the *Sacr. Congregation* in 1622 up to the year 1669 the systematization of the archives was entirely different: only certain volumes, some twenty or thirty, are said to deal with 'Georgian, Armenian, Persian, Chaldaean, Mesopotamian, Turkish,' etc., affairs, and those of the Carmelites of Persia in particular—these have been sifted. It may be noted, too, that not till 1656 did the *Sacr. Cong.* become administratively responsible for the Catholic missions, so that till then correspondence was on a far smaller scale than after 1669.
- S.N.R.** From another manuscript series, *Scritture Non Riferite*, i.e. papers, which at the time were not thought of sufficient importance to be laid before the full Congregation in its sessions, but were dealt with in the Secretariat of the Congregation, and sometimes referred to the 'Congresses'. Of the volumes covering Persia, Mesopotamia and the Chaldaeans, there are some seven between the years 1680 and 1770 (plus one of miscellanea, including papers right back to 1630 and on to 1800) of some 600 sheets each, which have been carefully perused.
- Acta or Atti.** The *procès-verbaux*, or orders passed for the proceedings of the sessions of the Congregation, one volume per annum covering all missions in the world, which contain no original letters or document, however: few have been used in this study.
- Chron. Basra** Quoted from, or on the authority of the manuscript narrative kept by missionaries intermittently at the Basra Residence of the Persian mission between the years 1670 and 1733. About the year 1880, after the church and residence of the Carmelites at Basra had been restored by the Superior in Baghdad, Fr. Mary Joseph, having no European Religious available he placed in charge of it two native Christian priests, the second of whom in his ignorance began to dispose of volumes from the library built up by the Fathers in the previous centuries, among them this particular manuscript, of which all trace was lost until in 1927 the late Sir Hermann Gollancz published under the title *Chronicle of Events between the years 1623 and 1733 relating to the Settlement of the Order of*

A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia

Carmelites in Mesopotamia, a transcript of the Latin and other languages of that missing manuscript, which had come into his possession, together with his translation into English, in which, however, there are many misreadings. This quarto of 456 folios is, however, the work in the main of four or five Fathers only, viz.—Fr. Agathangelus, the introduction and fos. 1–132; Fr. John Athanasius, fos. 176–336 (190 pages); Fr. Paul Augustine, fos. 337–56 (20 pages) and—presumably—also fos. 400–13 (14 pages); Fr. Urban, fos. 380–99 (20 pages); Fr. Placidus, fos. 413–48, the end (35 pages).

- Cont. Basra Chron.* i.e. quoted from a continuation of the above volume, covering the years 1733 to 1778. This manuscript had also been sold or given away from the library of the Carmelite Residence at Basra by the native Christian priest mentioned: as related by the saintly Fr. Peter of the Mother of God (whom the compiler had the honour to know)—the Spaniard Pedro Vincente Ruiz de Brizuela—in 1897 it was found in an underground cellar ('sardab') of a commercial firm among a pile of old wrapping-paper by an altar-server, who brought it to the Father, who saw at once what it was, and so recovered it for his Order. A transcription of it made in Spain in 1898, and now in the archives of the Order in Rome, was edited and published in 1934 under the title *Chronica Bassorensis Missionis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum annis 1733–78* by the learned Archivist of the Order, Fr. Ambrosius a S. Theresia, of its Bavarian province. It consists of 206 numbered pages, of which the chief part, covering the years 1733–69, was compiled by Fr. Angelus Felix, as is shown by the editor: and the rest by Fr. Fulgentius.
- Catalog. Miss.* From the manuscript list at the Casa Generalizia of the Order, Rome, of all missionaries, being itself a transcription—as far as he was able—by Fr. Joseph Mary of S. Theresa, sent to the Bombay mission before 1847, of a catalogue he had found badly damaged, and in places entirely destroyed by white ants.
- Cat. Def. Lomb.* Cited from the List of the Dead of the province of Lombardy, 1606–1769, a tome in print at the Casa Generalizia, Rome.
- Hier. Carm. (elitana)* From fascicles of biographical sketches of Prelates of the Order compiled (in Latin) by the Archivist, Fr. Ambrosius a S. Theresia, and published both in the *Analecta* and separately 1934.
- Hist. Miss.* From the MSS. (in Italian) *History of all the Missions of the Discalced Carmelites*, treated concurrently, by Fr. Eusebius ab Omnibus Sanctis, covering the years 1604 to about 1658 only, incomplete; composed about 1730.
- Hier. Lat. Orient.* From *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, 1622–1922, being Nos. 5 and 10, parts 1 and 2, from *Orientalia Christiana*, by the late Fr. Leonard Lemmens, of the Order of Franciscans Minor (Pontificio Istituto Orientale), printed 1923–4. Lists of the Bishops of Isfahan, Baghdad, Nakhchiwan, with quotations from the Congregations when they were selected, Bulls of appointment, etc.
- Fr. Father.
- Sacr. Cong. Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide, Rome, created 1622, which administers Catholic missions.
- Prov. Refers to the 'province' of the Order where the Religious in question was professed, and to which he belonged, often not in the country of which he was a native.

FOREWORD

IN EXPLANATION of the genesis and development of this work let it be said that at Bushire in the earlier years of this century the Discalced Carmelites were strongly entrenched with their base at Basra. The saintly and noble Spaniard, who was their head in the region, had furnished for a historical review a page or two of dates and notes regarding the first bishop of Isfahan, the foundation by the latter of a mission post at Shiraz in the sixteen-hundreds, and a few other isolated facts extending into the middle of the eighteenth century: it was all he possessed of information regarding the early activities of his own Order inside Persia proper, or Iran. At Shiraz, in the years after the war of 1914-8 various legends and vague traditions, not only among Christians, were still current but baffling—of Baba Kuhi (“the Father of the mountain”) on the hill-slopes above the plain and town having originally been a hermitage: of the pile on the north-western fringe of the town, so unlike the usual South Persian mosque in design and almost Byzantinesque in character, known as Bibi Dukhtaran, which from its very name had a suggestion of a “nunnery”, having in its vaults, unapproachable for the ordinary male and non-Muslim to boot, gravestones inscribed in some strange tongue hazarded to be Latin: of the site of a burial-ground inside the town known by inscriptions on slabs found but living memory had forgotten exactly where.

Then in 1927 the late Sir Hermann Gollancz published, with an English translation, under the title *A Chronicle of Events between the years 1623 and 1733 relating to the Settlement of the Order of Carmelites in Mesopotamia*, a transcription of a manuscript of some 450 folios in Latin and Arabic, which had come into his possession in some manner he did not therein explain, but which in point of fact had been a sort of diary and annals kept at the Carmelite mission at Basra.

After having been shown that publication, an old and esteemed friend and Carmelite, then Apostolic Administrator in Iran, wrote to the compiler of the present work on 29.6.1928:

“C’est la partie de nos Annales de Basrah qui nous manquait. Je puis même vous dire “comment la perte avait été faite, avant une cinquantaine d’années. Il m’est impossible “d’en connaître la date fixe, parce que la dilapidation dura des années. En 1901 mourait “à Bagdad un saint missionnaire, qui était resté 40 ans à Bagdad et s’appelait le Père “Marie Joseph. Le Supérieur-Général des Carmes l’avait expédié à Bagdad comme “supérieur avec un P. Xavier pour compagnon quand un domestique avait empoisonné “le dernier Carme italien, le Père Denys.

“Notre Supérieur-Général, informé des faits, choisit deux Français de la province de “Toulouse pour reprendre la mission. Tous les deux très zélés, ils firent des merveilles par “lesquelles la population de Bagdad fut transformée . . . puis le même Père Marie “Joseph s’occupa de Basrah où l’église et le couvent furent remis à neuf. Dans “cette dernière ville nous avons encore la vieille bibliothèque péniblement formée “pendant deux siècles et jalousement conservée. Oui: mais comme le supérieur des “Carmes n’avait personne à mettre dans cette maison, il la confia à des prêtres indigènes, “auxquels il fournissait toutes choses. Le dernier . . . manœuvra à Constantinople “pour obtenir que le Sultan lui donnât la propriété de notre mission. Il obtint un firman “en ce sens et le Père Marie Joseph eut toutes les peines du monde à faire retirer ce dernier “en montrant les actes de propriété des Carmes et le compte des dépenses faites par lui. “L’ambassade de France finit, toutefois, par avoir gain de cause, et la propriété fut rendue “d’office. Un autre prêtre prit donc la place du précédent et, par ignorance, lui

“s’attaqua à la bibliothèque. Que lui importaient ces livres écrits dans des langues “qu’il ne connaissait pas! . . . Le dit supérieur de Bagdad ne le connut que quand il était “trop tard. Que dire et que faire? Cela lui permit de réclamer des Pères et d’en obtenir; “mais le mal était fait!

“La Providence permit, pourtant, que bien des années après, le Père Pierre” (de la Mère de Dieu) “qui avait succédé au Père Marie Joseph, étant de passage à Basrah, reçut “un matin de son enfant de chœur un livre manuscrit sur lequel il jeta les yeux avant de “sortir pour dire sa Messe. Le jeune homme le lui avait apporté parce que ce livre était “écrit en diverses langues. Le Père Pierre reconnut aussitôt un livre de nos annales per- “dues, mais ne montra pas trop sa joie. Après la Messe il interrogeait pourtant son jeune “homme et apprenait que d’autres livres se trouvaient encore dans une maison qu’il lui “désigna. Avec des recherches deux autres furent encore découverts; mais l’un, le second, “fut introuvable. C’est ce qui m’a permis de découvrir en lisant le livre que vous “avez bien voulu me prêter, le second livre de nos annales qui était resté introuvable. Le “Père Pierre travailla sur les dits manuscrits et composa d’autres annales, qu’il fit récopier “en plusieurs exemplaires. J’ai compris ainsi qu’un autre avait été plus heureux que le “Père Pierre et que cet autre avait su en apprécier la valeur. Que le bon Dieu en soit “béné! Nos Pères retrouveront là ce qui leur manquait pour écrire l’histoire de trois “siècles en Orient.”

That manuscript, so found, formed the basis of two volumes put together in Mesopotamia under the name *Annales de la mission de Bagdad des Pères Carmes Déchaussés depuis sa fondation jusqu’à nos jours rédigées d’anciens manuscrits*, and now preserved in the archives of the Order in Rome (O.C.D. 184): but in 1934 the learned Archivist-General, Fr. Ambrosius a Sta Theresia, published and edited with explanatory notes the manuscript—*Chronica Bassorensis Missionis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum Annis 1733-1778*—and quoted in the words of Fr. Peter of the Mother of God himself the following brief account of the discovery:

“J’ai retrouvé une partie notable des dites Annales de l’année 1733 à l’année 1778, quarante- “cinq ans d’histoire! Voici comment j’ai fait cette belle trouvaille. Un de nos anciens “élèves, employé dans une maison de commerce, trouva dans un sardap” (i.e. an under- ground chamber used in summer heat as a dwelling in daytime) “au milieu d’un tas de “vieux papiers d’emballage, un cahier qu’il eut la curiosité de regarder. Il vit que c’était “écrit dans une langue qu’il ne comprenait pas. Alors il me le porta pour que je visse ce “que c’était. J’ouvre, je lis. Jugez de ma surprise et de ma joie. Que le bon Dieu en “soit loué!

BAGDAT, Avril 1897”

Both that larger portion of the lost annals which came into the hands of Sir Hermann Gollancz and was given to publication by him not long before his death and the other portion found by Fr. Peter of the Mother of God are, however, records, fragmentary in the main, of the activities of the Carmelite House in Basra and of events in Mesopotamia affecting it: to the mother mission in Persia itself—to Shiraz and other places references in those annals are made and names quoted, but cursorily.

To learn that such a record for Basra exists was to sharpen the appetite for more! Had not the Residence of the Carmelites at Shiraz also left similar accounts: if so, where was it preserved today? The Carmelite prelate cited above could only reply that the Fathers in Mesopotamia knew nothing about the former houses of the Order in Iran of the seventeenth century, or of any records; but he was so helpful as to furnish the present compiler with an introduction to one of the Definitor Generals in Rome through whose interest permission was given to peruse the general missionary history of the Order, unpublished and in manuscript, composed by Fr. Eusebius ab Omnibus Sanctis in the first part of the eighteenth century as well as original letters of missionaries dated from Shiraz. Two months’ work on this in the summer of 1929 was only to touch the fringe of the subject: and another visit to Rome in 1931 made it evident

that to unravel the facts about Shiraz could not be done without widening the research to cover the mother-mission at Isfahan: and, as will be read elsewhere in the explanatory notes to this book, that was a formidable task, for upwards of one thousand letters written by Religious in Iran and Basra are preserved in Rome in the original Italian, Latin, French, Spanish, Portuguese or Flemish, many far from easy to decipher.

Apart from Fr. Eusebius' unpublished work in four great volumes, which in the florid, verbose style of the period cover at random the whole range of the interests of the Order—from Ireland to Poland, from Malabar to the Congo, but down to 1655 only—two little books had been published on its "Persian" mission in French and Spanish in 1885 and 1920 respectively by Fr. Berthold Ignace de Ste Anne and by Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus: one, however, reached only the year 1612, the other 1625, and they were largely descriptive of the first pioneer journey in 1604-7: that was almost the sum total of attempts to write up the lost annals of the 170 years in Iran. It is only in the past eight years or so, since the present Archivist General, Fr. Ambrosius a Sta Theresia, has classified the manuscript letters and devoted himself in conjunction with the editing of the *Analecta* of the Order to a series of instructive monographs on its missionary prelates and to the edition of the *Chronica Bassorensis Missionis* mentioned that long-buried knowledge about the "Persian Mission" has begun to see light in modern scientific treatment.

Moreover the seven hundred letters and reports preserved in the archives of the Order in Rome leave unfilled large gaps in the 170 years. It is in the archives of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide that much additional correspondence of the Discalced Carmelites from Persia and Mesopotamia is to be found and, also of great value, other descriptions and reports regarding changing conditions in Iran written by members of the other religious Orders working in that country. Together with some investigation in the secret archives of the Vatican as to the interests of the Holy See in Persia prior to the creation of the Sacred Congregation in 1622 search in and copying from that source took up a portion of the years 1933 to 1935. There is, in fact, a plethora of material of one kind or another for any compilation of ordinary length to give an adequate representation of the activities, subjects and history covered by all the documents relating to Iran on record in these two mines of information: disregarding all that perished at sea and on land—"lost in the post" of those days—it is possible that as much fresh material remains to be garnered from the archives of the Sacred Congregation and, perhaps, from other sources as that reproduced here, and that future searchers will be well rewarded and able to supplement, correct and revise this; the research involved for a complete survey would, however, be far more protracted than in the present case and circumstances has been possible; much has doubtless escaped notice and many volumes and sources remain uninspected.

An article in *The Times* of February 16th 1935 emphasized the importance, the unique interest, the range of material of the archives in London of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, estimated to contain over 160,000 documents dating before 1900, of which over 30,000 are of the eighteenth century. But that is child's play compared with the archives of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide which, in existence for nearly one hundred years longer and drawing on so much larger a personnel in the religious Orders planted in four continents (Europe itself being in large parts a "mission field") by the greatest world-church, has accumulated over 5,000 bound volumes. For the present work, for instance, a large proportion of 400 volumes, many of them 600 to 800 pages thick, in one series alone have been examined, some carefully, others cursorily: and, there being no indexes, the contents bound haphazard by order of consideration at the several sessions each year of the Congregation, a letter from China may follow one from Ireland, a "summary" on the Grecian archipelago reports from India: correspondence from Dalmatia and Syria, Constantinople and North America, Muscovy and Egypt, or about the Armenians and Ruthenians, Poland and England and Cyprus have to be scanned and turned before a letter from "Persia" may be discovered. The searcher has a special reward, when he comes across a parchment bearing the sign manual

of Peter the Great, an autograph of the martyred Oliver Plunket, a scroll beautifully engrossed in Georgian script from a patriarch of that country, the signature of King Jan Sobieski to a letter.

This production has therefore developed gradually from its original scope, and now in the latter part of the main history covers practically the whole Catholic position in Persia and Mesopotamia, borrowing extensively from correspondence of Religious of other Orders in order to maintain the thread of the narrative, particularly when the Carmelites themselves were no longer dwelling at Julfa. Beginning as the record of a Papal Mission it also covers nearly all the relations and correspondence of the Holy See with the Persian rulers: and it provides a fairly complete account of the succession of Bishops of Isfahan and of those of Baghdad, with coadjutors of the latter, till 1773.

No student of the origin of the Carmelite missions in Iran and the East can begin his investigations from the year 1604; for it is only by a thorough review of the preceding relations of Persian rulers with Christendom and Turkey that the position in 1604 (and for another thirty years—one might say until the next century) can rightly be understood. Not only to the reader of today is it obvious that the early Carmelite mission was as diplomatic as it was evangelistic: frequently individual Carmelites will be found restive and protesting at the status or guise of envoys plenipotentiary thrust on them by circumstances, their energies and time taken away from their calling by negotiations on behalf of foreign princes or the Shah. The length of the introductory chapter, prior to the entry of the Carmelites on the scene, is to some extent unavoidable, and it does fulfil a salutary purpose.

Many figures and entities and communities and policies of interest pass in live fashion across the two-hundred-year long stage of these annals: Popes S. Pius V and Paul V endeavouring to rid Christendom of the nightmare of the Turk, Robert Sherley with his ear-ring and his amazon-hearted Caucasian wife, Imam Quli Khan the noted viceroy trying to bring the waters of the Karun to feed those of the stream of Isfahan: one by one the Portuguese in Hurmuz, the Dutch and English and French "East India" Companies disputing for mastery and influence, port after port coming into vogue and in course of time being eclipsed by another: the vicissitudes almost to extinction of that strange survival, the Mandaeans or pseudo-Sabaeans, forcible conversion of Hebrews *en masse* to the Shiah religion, a rigour and intolerance of dealing with the Armenian race, which surely can hardly have been realized for the truly dreadful toll it took of them as a Christian unit and is only surpassed in evil by the disgraceful violence of their own persecution of their Latinizing or Uniat brethren. It deals with that sudden and strange outbreak against the Latins witnessed in most oriental communities (not only of the Armenian) in the seventeenth century, which deserves a wide study and whole book to itself for anyone interested in the relations between the Churches of the East and West today: and it gives some account of the foundation of the Uniat groups in the Chaldaean and Armenian patriarchates, the origin of the present Christian communities in Baghdad, Basra, Julfa and Iran. Here are to be found clues to some problems of ethnology dating from the sixteenth century—transplantation of whole communities from one province of the far-flung empire to another: the 'diaspora' of the Armenians has hardly been less tragic in numbers, but far more so in murder and violence, than that of the Hebrews: one archaeologist at least may note with interest the hitherto unsuspected colonies of Georgians and Circassians planted in Fars.

The dark side of 'Abbas I—his callous cruelty (even in that age) and viciousness—stands starkly revealed; but elsewhere glimpses of that remarkable man in his wayward, whimsical moods, caught from day to day in personal interviews and artlessly recorded—of 'Abbas flicking small pebbles into the wine-cup brought for the Turkish Pashas, of his playing master of the ceremonies to Armenian ecclesiastics in their Epiphany blessing of the waters, of his grilling fish with his own hands in an alfresco evening party, and of his egging on Catholics and Lutherans to a dispute whether there were three or four nails used in the Crucifixion, and many others—will surely prove fascinating, and quite new matter, to Irani and non-Irani students of history alike. However, not until all the material available in Persian

writings in Iran itself, in state archives in Moscow, Lisbon, Madrid, Vienna, Paris, Constantinople and India, the Vatican and the various Orders be brought together, translated and collated with a scientifically accurate and full account of that monarch and his times be really attainable.

Fragmentary as are the references to some of them in the documents quoted, the characters and qualities of none of the noted Safawi dynasty, with the possible exception of Shah Safi, are here enhanced, but rather shown as vicious and despicable or cruel, or both, in contemporary European eyes: Nadir, by no means a successful general in all his military undertakings, it is hard to see as a national hero, easy as a bloodthirsty tyrant who was primarily responsible for the laying waste of the country, its territorial disruption after his death, and the economic collapse from which only after a century and a half it is beginning to recover: even Karim Khan Zand, so often praised by European writers and by tradition, loses credit in these pages.

Attention is drawn to the Appendix of Latin Briefs—a collection of the Letters of the Popes to Shahs of Persia of the Safawi dynasty (and Nadir Shah Afshar) between 1570 and 1750 never before extracted from the many volumes of manuscript copies of the originals which have to be searched, and now brought together. It is probably almost complete, and contains some seventy-five. Certain other Briefs addressed by the Popes to the kings of Spain and Poland, to the authorities in Portuguese Goa and Hurmuz about Persian affairs reviewed in the text of this work, and the Carmelites, and to Armenian patriarchs, are also given in full or by extracts. The Briefs to the “kings” of Persia provide evidence of the constant exhortations from Rome—all the influence by the written word and representative Religious at Isfahan that could be brought on the Persian monarchs to wage war against the Turks, so that by Persian arms harassing the eastern flank of the Ottoman Empire in conjunction with the resistance offered by Christian states Europe and Christianity, at that time so sorely menaced and pressed, might be saved.

It is only to be expected that the treatment given to the subject will satisfy neither class of reader—that those interested in the spiritual side of Carmelite work will find too much mundane matter, war and viciousness and savagery and details of oriental history, while the student of Persian history will be repelled by finding this interlarded with lengthy descriptions of the religious life of the missionaries, the trials and straits of their Residences, and antagonism with the schismatics. The answer is that the primary purpose is by way of a memorial, and testimony of admiration, to those two hundred sons of Carmel and S. Teresa, who gave up everything to serve their fellow-men in perils and privations, often abandoned in solitary charge of a Residence for years together, in order that their names and personalities, so long forgotten, may live in the grateful remembrance and admiration of their brethren of this and later ages; while, when there were so many personal contacts with the Safawi monarchs and when so many definite, precise facts and dates of historical value have been recorded by the Religious in their letters, it would have been negligent to suppress a connected mention of them—to cite one example, where else is to be learnt the month when the first “Chihil Situn” was destroyed, and the present building began to be re-erected? The *Literary History of Persia* is a case in point, where in the hands of a master unsurpassed in all aspects of his subject the political history of Iran can be followed as secondary matter and between the pages of the verses from the poets, often in more enlightening fashion than in any work devoted exclusively to the political and military events of the reigns: and humbly this contribution to knowledge of the Iran of the past seen and heard through Western eyes and ears follows in the track of that great orientalist, for whom the opportunity is here taken to express affectionate, undying gratitude. It is all to the good that the layman seeking historical data should be brought perforce to acquaint himself with the religious life and efforts of a great Order (and, if he be an English-speaking Protestant, he may be surprised to find how frequent and friendly and liberal were the relations of the Discalced Carmelites with non-Catholic English merchants and travellers in the region of the East covered, how generous Anglicans were in financial aid to this Order,

which in the 1720's was specially trusted, and appointed in an amazing document, by the Government of Bombay under the East India Company to have charge of the thousands of Roman Catholics living on that island): all to the good, too, that the Carmelite, of today, interested in the creative spirit, the devotional output and lives of his brethren of olden time, should in his search through these pages be brought face to face with the grossly materialistic and cruel oriental surroundings, in which the missionaries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries worked, and in which they contributed at times in a small way to make history. They, at any rate, did not spare their Carmelite contemporaries in Europe and the authorities in the Vatican these details of wars and killing and licence, and the ways of government of the country here related.

The 'man of the world', hesitating, perhaps, to open a book on 'missions' lest it be merely unworldly outpourings of presumed 'ignorant friars', may be surprised and reassured to learn that, apart from the ten or so of those to find a place in the narrative and in the biographical notices who were thought worthy to be promoted bishops, three at least became subsequently Generals in Rome of the whole Order—and election from a body of several thousands of divers nationalities should indicate merit or attainments of some outstanding nature—one had been the holder of a hereditary dukedom and great estates, a nephew of a reigning Pope, military officers, aristocrats and courtiers, a lawless young noble—lives renounced to become poor men after the fashion of S. Francis but among infidels in distant lands: several physicians, a botanist of some note, and, among many of those sent out from the seminary in Rome, where Arabic was taught in preparation, and a number of fluent translators in various oriental tongues one who produced a lexicon of much learning and ponderous dimensions. As chaplain one died on a field of battle in distant Afghanistan, another was slain as chaplain to an envoy returning to Europe via Russia, two were drowned in gales, two perished of infection when ministering to sick on voyages, several in epidemics when they had held to their posts: two, at least, returning to their posts from Europe fell into the hands of the dreaded Barbary corsairs and passed years in captivity until exchanged or redeemed, just as others of them were forcibly detained for long periods in Muscovite territory: they spent their hard, abstemious lives generously.

It may not be without interest to missionary organizations of the present day, when hygiene, preventive medicine, the attendance of doctors, surgical skill, serum against epidemics, protection against the sun by sun-helmets and far more comforts are usually within reach of the missionary in the Middle East and Western India, to compare the following data afforded by these biographical notices with figures of today. The average life lived, for 138 of these Carmelites, who served longer or shorter periods in the East, was 54.3 years: the average length of service in the missions for 150 of these Carmelites was 14.5 years. Five of them remained over 40 years in the mission posts, fifteen 30 years or over. Twenty lived to be septuagenarians, six to be octogenarians despite the climate, fevers without quinine, the primitive knowledge of medicine and lack of surgery they had experienced.

The narrative could have been far briefer, more compact and easily readable, had it not been told within inverted commas for the most part; but, for the sake of permanent reference and that the personal character and style of writing of individual Religious may be brought out and live for future times, as far as possible the wording of the Carmelites and other Religious, their own descriptions have been kept—in translation, that is to say (far too diffusely, it may be admitted). Apology is also made for the stilted English used in many translations in an attempt to give as literally as possible the writers' vocabulary and mannerisms, to convey the quality of the spirituality and fervour of each. The question of translation in such a compilation of material in several European languages is truly difficult and unsatisfactory: English is not the best medium for reaching the generality of Carmelite and kindred potential readers, and that is regrettable: Latin would restrict it to Religious and the learned, putting the work outside the pale for the ordinary layman, and is, besides, an indifferent medium for technicalities of oriental linguistics and names: in Italian, where the bulk of the quotations

could be given *ipsissimis verbis*, there would still be the drawback of having to translate all the remainder of the material.

References to letters and documents in the footnotes on such an extensive scale throughout the book serve the triple purpose—not only of giving ‘chapter and verse’ for all quotations and statements of fact, but—what is more important—of enabling Carmelite students in Rome in future to turn without difficulty to any particular letter from these Eastern missions in which they may be specially interested for further research, while at the same time providing means for tracing Carmelite writings in the archives of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide to take copies therefrom for completion of the record of the Generalate. Lastly, the footnotes contain supplementary information from other sources bearing on, and throwing light on the subjects treated.

The system of transliteration for Persian and Arabic words and names is that prescribed by the Government of India, which approximates to that followed by the great orientalist cited, that is to say, the vowels *a, i, u* only are used to reproduce the fatha-kisra-dumma (*e* being kept only with *h* to give the final “closed” *h* at the end of Persian words—with rare exceptions): and the compounds *th-ch-kh-zh-sh-gh*, as well as *q* (hard, without following *u*)—*’a-w-y* (in the case of the two *s* and *t* the distinguishing dot below of the strict orientalist is not attempted) are to provide for the extra consonants and special sounds non-existent in Latin script, there being thirty-two alphabet signs in the Persian language. It has its strangeness for the uninitiated: Masqat for the usual Muscat, Mausil for Mosul, but it is a tested system and more accurate than most others. It will be seen that ecclesiastical settlements in far lands and the Levant in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were known by the Latin expression *residentia*, from which it became adopted for the political establishments of Europeans as “Residency” (perpetuated, for instance, in what has been till recently the “Residency” in Cairo): in this book, to mark the distinction in the case of Carmelite and other religious houses, “Residence” is the English form used.

Should any Irani happen on these pages he will realize that, with every deference to the desire for the land to be called by the name its people use—Iran (as any Western traveller can endorse)—it would have been an impracticable task to transpose it the many thousands of times in these ancient manuscripts writers employed the inaccurate terms “Persia” and “Persian”, which therefore have been retained throughout.

It should be clearly understood that responsibility for the selections made from the writings and any expressions used or deductions drawn rests solely with the lay compiler of this work: the Discalced Carmelite Order is not *en cause*.

That it has been built up and put together in tropical islands thousands of miles from any large European library is the explanation why other European travellers of the period have for the most part not been quoted and used to check statements and fill historical gaps, why Persian sources have not been explored to supply names and data.

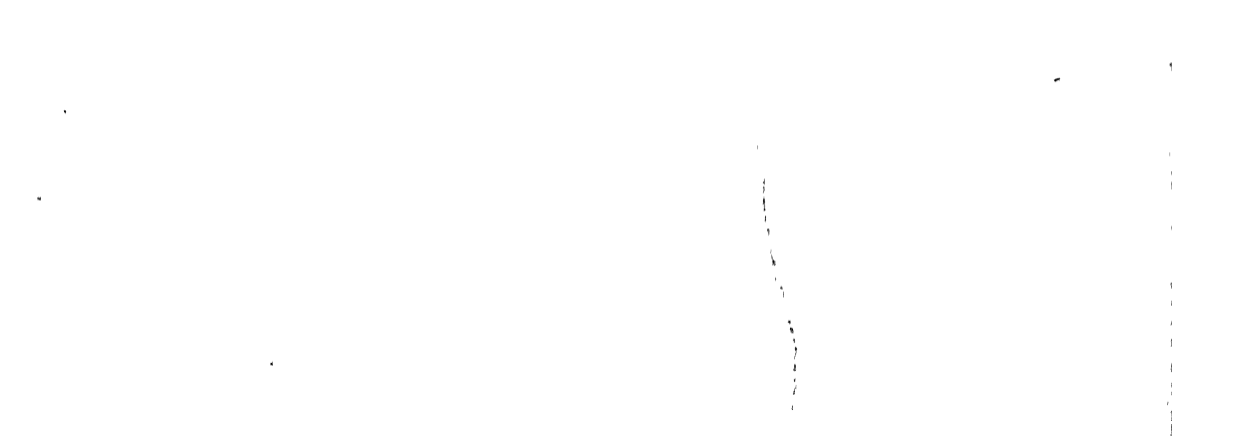
With that, and with all respect, he tenders his respectful thanks to his Eminence the present Cardinal Prefect Fumasoni Biondi for the greatly prized privilege of having been allowed for many months in different years to be one of the small band of workers in the Archivio of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide, and in particular to Monsignor Dr. Giuseppe Monticone, the Archivist General of the Congregation, for much friendly interest and kindly assistance in the search for material: to Monsignor (now his Eminence Cardinal) Eugène Tisserant, when pro-Prefect of the Vatican Library, for facilities and help in 1931 and 1935: and to the most reverend Monsignor Angelo Mercati, Prefect of the Secret Archives of the Vatican, for permission to search and use material in them and for his benevolence and encouragement. More than anyone, of course, the very reverend the Praepositus General till 1937 of the Discalced Carmelites, Fr. William of S. Albert and, under him, the Archivist General of the Order, Fr. Ambrosius of S. Theresia, have the gratitude of the compiler for the liberality with which they have made him welcome for considerable periods in the record-room of their Casa Generalizia in Rome, and for material so unstintedly put at his disposal.

A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia

It will be the reward of the compiler if they and their grand Order, as a whole, will accept this production, this *opusculum*, as a grateful homage to lives of their brethren of past centuries, nobly spent and spilled (not only in the ink and forgotten mass of papers—more than 7,000 baptisms of moribunds into the Christian Faith and promise of eternal life as registered at Isfahan by 1699 already were ample return alone to show) by one who was edified for many long years by association with a recent generation of Discalced Carmelites on those distant Eastern shores, and profited by their ministrations. To the authorities at the India Office, London, acknowledgment is here appropriately made for permission to inspect and make notes from records of the East India Company, to those of the British Museum, and to Mr. A. Chester Beatty for permission to reproduce miniatures of the Shahs, the series of which is perhaps thus brought together and published for the first time.

THE COMPILER
1939

PART I



INTRODUCTORY HISTORICAL REVIEW UP TO 1585

THAT AS the sixteen hundreds began—now fast approaching three and a half centuries ago—the Discalced Carmelites first went into Persia was no matter of haphazard selection for evangelization of any area in the globe, which might have attracted the interest of any individual head or member of an Order only recently remodelled and little inclined for external activities: personal velleities had small part in it. Rather, it was brought about by a concatenation of needs which, under the disposition of Divine Providence, the Order was appointed to serve and set itself to serve, in large measure against the current of its own volition. It will be the task of the introductory chapter of this study to approach it—sometimes in much detail—along the several lines of development and action which finally fused in that dramatic decision and cry “In Persidem” of the Sovereign Pontiff in the summer of 1604, as well as to imbue the reader who cares for it with a thorough sense of the ambients in which the enterprise began its existence.

How the Order, after its reform, came to listen to a call for missionary energies in the face of much to deter it; why, with Europe and America offering immense scope and easier communications, a country so distant and difficult of access in the Muslim East came to be its objective; what caused Pope Clement VIII to find it necessary and desirable to send his own representatives to Persia at that particular juncture; what moved an autocratic ruler in the heart of the Middle East to allow Christian propagandists into his realms and to establish themselves there in spite of all the prejudices of fanaticism; some account of the general political relations of European states with the East at the time the mission was launched; and the internal conditions of Persia itself as illustrated by phases of its history during the previous hundred years—these are all lights which must be allowed to illuminate the ground before the task confronting the pioneer Carmelites, the inherent difficulties under which they laboured, and how far they made good, can be appraised at their full value.

Ignoring the travels and preaching of isolated friars and priests, who had been to or in the East from the thirteenth century onwards, one may first note how many Orders had established and were working definite, permanent, missionary areas and stations in the continent of Asia by 1600.

There were, of course, the Franciscans, the Friars Minor of the Holy Land, sole and exclusive ‘Guardians of the Holy Sepulchre’, as has been their merit since 1496 by grants and confirmations of various Popes; they were at Alexandretta before 1600, before 1560 at Aleppo, while their present church and convent at Tripoli date from 1582 (irrespective of single years and short periods between 1250 and 1496, when in numerous documents, they are mentioned as residing in several towns of Palestine and Syria), and they were at Smyrna in 1400. In the Far East the Franciscans claim to have had a church in Peking in 1299, an archbishop with six suffragans by 1307; but their missions in China had been ruined in 1368, and were restored only in 1579 by missionaries from the Philippines.¹ Beginning from 1534 they had missionaries (doubtless not permanently in several cases, but at times) in India; on the west coast at Diu, Chaul, Basseim, Goa, Mangalore; at Tuticorin and Colombo in the south and Ceylon; at Negapatam and Meliapur on the east coast; at Chittagong on the Ganges in Bengal.

The Capuchins appear not to have been in the East before the seventeenth century.

The Dominicans by 1548 had their headquarters for missions in India, Ceylon, Siam and Malacca at Goa: they claim to have been since 1559 in China, since 1586 in the Philippines, in Japan from 1601 till the common expulsion of missionaries. From 1318 they had, too,

¹ These, and other dates following, are approximate, as taken from articles in the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*; *La Compagnie de Jésus*, by J. Boucher, S.J.; *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, 1895.

their settlement in Greater Armenia, in the district of Nakhchiwan, to which reference will often be made.

The Jesuits were established in Western India, at Goa, etc., presumably from 1548 by S. Francis Xavier; there was a mission to Delhi in 1580, a church at Agra by 1602, from 1598 they began work in Bengal. In China (at Canton, Nanking, Peking, Macao, etc.) the Jesuits claim to have had four colleges, a seminary and forty mission stations from 1581; the noted Fr. Ricci settled at Peking in 1600. In Japan, where S. Francis Xavier had first landed in 1549, it is asserted that by 1582 there were some 200 "churches" or chapels, fourteen to twenty houses founded by the Order, including a noviciate and two seminaries (all of course closed and abandoned when the expulsion of missionaries came in the century following).

Between 1549 and 1575 the Augustinian Hermits had also got to work in the Philippines: from Hurmuz in the Persian Gulf they settled themselves at Goa, also during the last quarter of the sixteenth century.

But that, succinctly, seems to cover the small area of missionary settlements in the vastness of the Asiatic continent.

It must have called, then, for some exceptional impulse, some important conjuncture to send an Order, new to missionary enterprise too, into the heart of a region of Middle Asia and so remote from coastal districts where the few Orders mentioned were already at work.

* * * * *

First—for the layman—the question needs answer: Who were the Discalced Carmelites, and what was their position in 1600?

To go back to the beginning of things, the circumstances recorded indicate the cliffs and fastnesses of Mount Carmel, which rise above the busy modern port of Haifa and are rapidly losing their religious seclusion and amenities through the encroachments of commercial building, to have been ground already hallowed to the worship of the Deity, when in the reign of Ahab in Israel—i.e. between 878 and 850 B.C. the mount was appointed for that revelation of His power so impressively related in the third book of Kings, xviii. 1-42:

"Post dies multos factum est verbum Domini ad Eliam, in anno tertio, dicens—Vade, "te ostende ad Achab ut dem pluviam super faciem terrae. . . . Verumtamen nunc "mitte ac congrega ad me universum Israel in monte Carmeli. . . . Misit Achab ad "omnes filios Israel et congregavit prophetas in monte Carmeli. . . . Elias ascendit in "verticem Carmeli et . . . in septima autem vice. . . . Ecce nubecula parva quasi "vestigium hominis ascendebat de mari . . ."

—that vision to which reference is made in the lection of the second nocturn of the feast of Our Lady of Carmel:

" . . . ubi Elias olim ascendentem nebulam Virginis in typo insignem conspexerat eidem "purissimae Virginis sacellum construxerunt . . ."¹

The tradition has endured that from those days of the great prophets of Israel the mountain continued to have throughout the centuries its recluses and men of God. To the pagan Pliny, as the Christian era began, they were "gens sola et toto in orbe praeter coeteras mira".

If Samaria and Mount Geraizim with its special worship has remained and subsists to this twentieth century after Christ, if Mount Sinai and its monastic settlement provides a shorter witness to the agelong durability of the contemplative life remote from traffic, there is naught to gainsay, or for scepticism to brand as impossible, in the tradition that, down

¹ Quoting *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the site of the Prophet's altar according to tradition was at Al Muhrakeh at the eastern end of the ridge, the mountain itself being known to orientals as "Mar Elias".

through the first thousand years of the Christian era after anchorites and hermitages, solitaires and coenobia had become a recognized feature of it, Mount Carmel, too, had had always its religious denizens. In the first four centuries Paul and Pachomius and Antony had covered Upper and Lower Egypt, not so far away, with the followers of their life: the mountain and peninsula of Athos have shown the like possibility, in another form, for nigh a thousand years.¹

The Crusades kindled anew the flame of devotion to that life lived apart on the hallowed mountain:² it is definite historical fact that under the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem S. Albert, patriarch, about the year 1209 found the hermits on Carmel so numerous that he formed them into a community and gave them a Rule, laying down as the

'principal objective of their monastic life the mystic union of the soul with God by means of love and contemplation. He had left also as a secondary aim to the brethren that of being useful to their neighbours. Although retreat prayer and silence were prescribed by him, he made the exception—"unless for good reasons the Religious are occupied in "something else".'³

That is how the Order was called into being, and they came to take their name from the mount: it has been and is their spiritual domicile of origin, their link with all the past ages of the worship of the one, true God, by right of descent back to His inspired, the prophet Elias.

"The 30th January 1926 marked the end of the seventh century since the approval of our "Primitive Rule, that Rule for which Saint Brocard and his companions had asked so "pressingly . . . and which S. Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem, wrote so wisely and gave "to the denizens of the Mountain. . . . Seven centuries have passed since the Bull of "Honorius III, given in the town of Rieti, confirmed our Rule. . . . From Saint Brocard "to Saint Cyril, third Latin general . . . from Saint Simon Stock,⁴ who obtained from "Innocent IV⁵ some slight modifications, up to the memorable fall of Ptolemais and of "the Latin kingdom in Palestine (1291), the Primitive Rule was always the solid support "of an exemplary life and source of glory, the brilliance of which shone on Palestine and "the whole East. . . ."⁶

With the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Hermits of S. Augustine, the Carmelites formed one of the four Orders of mendicant friars who left their mark so widely on the culture of Europe and its corporate Catholic life. In the course of the following centuries the conditions of life around them brought a slackening, a laxity in the observance of the Primitive Rule.

"The Order of Carmel in Europe continued on the upward grade till it reached the fullness of its development . . . then came decadence, afterwards mitigation of the Rule. . . ."⁷

and the Letter of 1925 from the Praepositus General of the Order may be cited again:

¹ Ruins of a large monastery were visible in 1185, according to the Greek monk Phokas from Patmos, and a monk in priest's orders had not long before arrived from Calabria in obedience to a vision, and built a small church and campanile amid the ruins, living with about ten others from Europe.

² After a massacre by the Saracens in 1238, the first convent buildings fell into decay. Two English Crusaders are said to have taken one recluse back with them, by whom a community was begun at Alnwick. But besides S. Simon Stock another early connection with England is that the first Chapter General of the Order in Europe was held, 1245, at Aylesford, about 12 miles from Sittingbourne.

³ Vide Fr. Berthold-Ignace de S. Anne, O.C.D., *Histoire de l'établissement de la mission de Perse par les PP. Carmes Déchaussés*, 1608-12. Bruxelles, 1885, p. 346.

⁴ The name of S. Simon Stock (died 16.5.1265) will be familiar to English readers for his church in London: he was an Englishman, elected in 1247 sixth General of the Primitive Order, which began to work in England by 1249 at Cambridge, the site and memory of the London convent, founded about 1253, being preserved in the "Carmelite Court" and "Carmelite Press" of *The Times* newspaper.

⁵ It should be noted that Pope Innocent IV (1243-54) had intercalated the direction that the Religious "are obliged to travel often", i.e. for the salvation of their neighbours.

⁶ Quoted from the letter addressed to the Order of Carmelites by the Praepositus General, William of S. Albert, Rome 8.12.1925.

⁷ Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus, quoted hereafter.

"... and even when the hardness of the times obliged Pope Eugenius IV in 1431 to "mitigate the strictness of the Rule. . . ."

More than a century was to pass after that step until to teach afresh the essential merits of the earlier life of the Order a reformer arose in a woman—gifted with one of the most remarkable intellects of her age in Europe—Saint Teresa from Avila, who as a nun in one of the numerous convents in Spain for women living under the vows and according to the life of the Order had already planned and commenced, with supernaturally given vision and courage, the uphill struggle of remodelling those convents of Carmelite nuns to a stricter life with more definite objectives. That milestone—the "Reform", as it is known in the Order—may be dated from the foundation of the convent of S. Joseph at Avila in Castile, 24.8.1562.

Having begun with the nuns of the Order, S. Teresa was inspired to organize the even more strenuous conquest of the male Religious in their convents: and souls tempered for the task were at hand. The sequel will here best be told in outline by culling from the accounts in the works of Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus, published in Madrid 1923 under the title *La Orden de Santa Teresa, la Fundacion de la Propaganda Fide y las Misiones Carmelitanas*: the same author's *A Persia*, second volume, published at Pamplona in 1929: and Fr. Berthold-Ignace de S. Anne's *Histoire de l'établissement de la mission de Perse par les PP. Carmes Déchaussés, 1608-12*, Bruxelles, 1885, p. 346.¹

John de Yepes, the future Saint John of the Cross and great mystic of the Catholic Church, was born at Fontiveros in Old Castile in 1542, descended in direct line from the hidalgo Francis Garcia de Yepes, who served under king John II, and the youngest son of Gonzalo de Yepes, a weaver. After the death of his father, the family being in poor circumstances, John went with his mother and settled at Medina del Campo where, after serving apprenticeships in several trades and as an attendant in a hospital for fevers and skin diseases, he took the habit in the local convent of the Carmelites of the relaxed Observance, 24.2.1563. From the first he elected to follow the austerities of the Primitive Rule. Having taken the vows in 1564, he was sent to study at the university of Salamanca 1564-7, when he became a priest. In September of the latter year S. Teresa came to Medina del Campo, and Fr. John confided to her that he desired to become a Carthusian. S. Teresa, however, persuaded him to remain with the Carmelites so as to propagate and carry out among his fellow Religious the reform she had in mind.

With one companion, Fr. Antony of Jesus, on 28.11.1568 he made a start in a corner of Old Castile called Duruelo: he was transferred to Mancera, 11.6.1570; in 1572-7 he was at Alcalà de Henaras. While acting as confessor of the nuns of the Order at Avila, he was seized by those of the brethren who opposed a return to the primitive austerities and Rule, of which everywhere he was being the apostle: carried off and beaten, he was imprisoned for nine months at Toledo.

Thus, almost at once profound disputes arose among the friars on account of the tenacity of the opposition, whose protagonists brought to bear all their influence with the Pope and king Philip II of Spain to stifle and repress those who were working with Fr. John of the Cross. But, before his death in 1591, he and his associates had won through; for by Brief of Pope Gregory XIII (Buoncompagni) two mutually independent Carmelite organisms were constituted, each being assigned its own superiors: and the *Discalced* (for they chose as their distinctive appellation the sign that they go barefoot—except for sandals) in the Chapter held at Alcalà de Henaras, 3.5.1581, obtained for the first time recognition of their separate entity and authority.

Thenceforth, therefore, the undivided Order of the previous centuries—which the French call "les Grands Carmes"—has existed in two branches, the "Calced" Carmelites following the mitigated Rule of 1431, the "Discalced" Carmelites that of the Reform of S. Teresa from Avila and S. John of the Cross. It is another important milestone in the story.

¹ Also from articles in (a) *Etudes Carmelitaines historiques et critiques, 11^{me} année*, 1926, p. 2, and (b) *Osservatore Romano*—"S. Teresa e le sue memorie romane," 14th October 1935.

By 19.1.1582 the Discalced had opened a house in Lisbon, and their supporter and protector, king Philip II of Spain, who had recently seized the throne of Portugal, desired that they should dispatch missionaries to the Portuguese colonies in Guinea, the Congo, Angola. S. Teresa, consulted by the Provincial of the new body, saw in this call a manifestation of the Divine will and gave it every encouragement. In her lifetime, on 20.3.1582, the first party of missionaries was dispatched from Lisbon; but the ship foundered with all on board after a collision, so that many in the Order lost all zeal for missions, a sentiment which became intensified when a second expedition, which left Lisbon in April 1583, was no more successful in reaching Angola, being captured by Protestant corsairs, who marooned the three Religious on a desert isle.

At the Provincial Chapter of the Discalced, met at Almodovar in March 1583, views were decidedly divided between those who considered that their Order should be altogether contemplative, and those who still held to the missionary project as one means of fulfilling their call. Fr. Jerome Gratian of the Mother of God and the majority defended it, and he has left it on record that he had the counsel and aid of S. Teresa herself who—it was not long before her death—let it be known that she considered part of the goal of the “Reform” to be the propagation of the Church and conversion of heretics and infidels, the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ by every manner of means, prayer, penitence, preaching, etc.: and so, for the time being, some twelve Religious were sent off to New Mexico, others continued to feed the enterprise in the Congo.

But Fr. Nicolas of Jesus Mary (a member of one family of Doria from Genoa), who, after the chapter at Almodovar had been sent to Italy with the faculty of setting up houses in that peninsula and who, 6.12.1584, actually took possession for the Order of the ancient chapel of S. Anne at Genoa with the support of the local patricians and clergy, was himself a convinced opponent of missionary work in infidel parts, and by 1588 had had suppressed that in the Congo and elsewhere in West Africa: he indeed set out to smother the existence of any missionary spirit at all among the Religious in the convents of Spain. On the other hand, as to Italy, on 20.9.1586 he obtained a Brief from Pope Sixtus V authorizing the “reformed” province to have a representative at Rome, where in 1591 Fr. Peter of the Mother of God was sent, and (having been recalled to Genoa in 1594) once more in 1596.

Unwillingness on the part of the superiors in Spain and of king Philip II himself to see convents of the “Reform” founded outside Spain, even in Rome, and the acute division of views among the Religious, led Pope Clement VIII (Aldobrandini), informed of the state of affairs, to say:

“Well, if such be the position, let Us separate the Discalced in Italy from those in Spain—let the latter follow the opinion of their sovereign, let them be governed by their own superiors and continue to be as they have been up till now, fervent and observant Religious: those who are in Italy shall remain from now onwards under Our immediate jurisdiction, and with them We shall propagate the ‘Reform’ of the Mother Teresa throughout the world.”

Having learnt that there were not more than thirty Discalced Carmelites in Italy the Pope added that, if two Carmelites (i.e. S. John of the Cross and Fr. Antony) could begin with success the “Reform” in Spain, he, the Pope, might well do it in Italy with thirty. So, in due course, 20.3.1597, Clement VIII separated those Carmelites already in Italy from obedience to the superiors of the “Reformed” Order in Spain. Their Constitutions, modifying those of the Spanish Constitutions, were approved by Cardinal Pinelli, 28.5.1599. The preaching, and numbers of conversions made by the fathers in Italy created such an impression that by another Brief of 13.11.1600 the Pope raised their convents in Italy to the status of a Congregation: at the same time he prevailed on the superiors of the Spanish branch to send a number of Spanish Religious to Italy in order to give the new Congregation not only a solid base, on which to build its new house in Rome, but also the tone, the atmosphere, the cornices

and columns of the Observance, fragrant and lofty as these had become under the inspiration and moulding of the Founders of the "Reform".

Here, then, is a third milestone—one of the two branches of the original Carmel subdivided in two independent parts, the Congregation in Spain, which alone might extend its activities in the Spanish and colonies, and the Congregation of Italy, to which the rest of the world was assigned as a field. (In 1876 these two subdivisions and Congregations were reunited to form the present, universal Order of the Discalced.)

When the building of the church of S. Maria della Scala across the Tiber in Trastevere had been finished in 1597 the Pope put the new Congregation of Italy in charge of it: to it came from the convent at Genoa the venerable Fr. Peter of the Mother of God, and built the house of the noviciate, where for so many years the Order had its world centre: and the Fathers, whom the Spanish Congregation had generously sent from Spain in 1600, were of their best—men of remarkable talent as well as profound religious formation and worth—as likewise were a number of the early professed in Italy.

That missionary spirit, which had been one of the causes of the conflict of ideals and the discord in Spain after 1582, soon came to the surface again among those Religious transferred to Italy, and infected the new Congregation. Invited by Neapolitans to preach in Lent 1602 at the church of the Annunciation in Naples Fr. Peter succeeded to such an extent that he was asked to establish a house of the Congregation there. To it was posted Fr. John of S. Elisaeus, born at Calahorra in Spain and received into the Order at Valladolid in 1596: he had ardently desired to become a missionary among the Muslims of Palestine but met with no encouragement, and perhaps because of his sentiments was one of the Religious transferred to the new Congregation of Italy in 1601. In Rome his superiors paid small attention to the longings and hopes he made known to them, for they thought him hardly endowed with the prudence, eloquence and theological equipment requisite for converting Muhammadans. However, among his penitents at Naples was a Baron Francisco Cimini di Cacurri, from Calabria, who had conceived the idea of devoting part of his fortune to a seminary for the instruction of young infidels fallen into the power of the Christians: the suggestion of Fr. John of S. Elisaeus to him was that he, the Baron, might be destined by God to have the honour of setting the Religious of his Order once again on Mount Carmel, so holy and dear to them by tradition.

Aware of the enthusiasm and projects of Fr. John, the Carmelites at the new convent in Naples complained to the Commissary General, Fr. Peter, at that time in Naples: and the latter at first declined to countenance the proposal, administering a rebuke to Fr. John and warning him against raising in Italy a dissension similar to that which in Spain had had such painful and portentous results. One characteristic of Fr. John was his candour and frankness: and, in his sorrow for giving cause for rebuke, he offered to the Fr. Commissary General to bind himself by vow to keep perpetual silence regarding missionary enterprise. Struck by this act of submission, the Commissary General wondered whether there might not be some manifestation of the Divine Will; and he went to consult the views of the Superior of the convent, at that time a member of a distinguished family of Genoa, the Rivarola, Fr. Paul of Jesus Mary, who—perhaps to Fr. Peter's surprise—stated himself to share Fr. John's ideas, and to be convinced of their sound inspiration. When back in Rome the Commissary General took the opinions of the senior fathers at the convent of La Scala, and found them favourable to undertaking missionary work. Next he formulated in writing a proposition, which he laid before all capitulars in the three convents of Genoa, Rome and Naples, and asked for their views thereon to be put in writing, viz.: "Are missions in infidel lands in keeping, or not, with the spirit of the 'Reformed' Carmel?" The answers, which reached him were as diverse and conflicting as the views expressed in the memorable Chapter at Almodovar, and perhaps more so.

When a body of men, such as is a Religious Order, within the compass of the scope and objective of their Rule and Life, includes two such diverse occupations and trainings as contemplation, solitude and retreat demand on the one hand, missionary activity in infidel lands on

the other, seeing that the component members are constantly changing and surrounded by changing currents and modes of thought it is in the natural order of things that their loyalties to one ideal or the other should vary and fluctuate and predominate: sometimes warm in support, at others cold, grudging the time, labour and effort given. This is important to remember in connection with the results of the mission in Persia, and will explain partially its future difficulties, lack of the success and fruits at first expected and so promising, and its final disappearance from the field. For, just as there was the great cleavage of ideals and loyalties at Almodovar, and again in Rome in 1601-4, so throughout the missionary history of the Order there have been spells of enthusiasm, or at least whole-hearted support for the missions in infidel countries, other periods of indifference and almost opposition. Exigencies of situations in Rome, Italy or Europe, internal needs and atmosphere of the Order, financial embarrassments, political situations in times of war and trial in Europe (the French Revolution, for instance) might take up the attention of the Curia, apart from personal inclinations to the one mode of life or the other in individual members of the Definitory, or in whole chapters.

While Fr. John of S. Elisaeus on his part continued fervently in prayer for the blessing of God on his plans "and all that Lent kept rigorously to a fast of bread and water alone", the Commissary General laid the perplexities of the Congregation before Pope Clement, who told him that Palestine did not lack missionary activity as much as they seemed to think, since the Franciscan Friars Minor were already at work there, and in the Lebanon there were the Maronites, excellent Catholics. On the other hand (by a long chain of developments, to be narrated separately hereafter) there synchronized in the mind of the Sovereign Pontiff a need to send ambassadors to the Shah of Persia, and for certain reasons Religious, as being more suitable than lay envoys: and he suggested that alternative field to Fr. Peter of the Mother of God. Mindful on his side of all the controversy among the Carmelites on the subject of missions, the Commissary General hesitated the more: for of the two projects Mount Carmel at any rate had the attraction and lure of being the cradle of their Order. The Pope bade him charge one of the most learned and sensible of the congregation to study the problem in the light of the spirit of Saint Teresa, and her views as they had been left in her writings and sayings, and then to produce a report in writing.

The Religious to whom the task was entrusted, Fr. John of Jesus Mary—he was in later times termed by the great French orator-bishop, Bossuet, a "most distinguished theologian and mystic"—duly completed it: the conclusion of the treatise, which he produced,¹ was to the effect that they had the sole alternatives of either approving the spirit of their Mother Teresa and venerating her as their founder, or of disapproving her spirit and not recognizing her: and in the latter case it would be both temerity and ingratitude. That being the position, it was quite certain to him, from the evidence he had examined and recapitulated, that all the steps and actions of S. Teresa, her petitions and the prayers of her nuns (since they themselves as women were debarred from undertaking the work) had been for the conversion of the nations through preaching and teaching of the Gospel.

He made short work of the three main objections argued against the Congregation taking up missionary work among the infidels: that such occupation was unfitting for an Order, whose chief aim was contemplation, solitude and retreat: that their numbers were insufficient even to keep up the two convents then founded in Italy: that their Religious were unworthy to propagate the Faith from lack of the talents, learning and virtues requisite. The first he countered by pointing to great saints like Saint Bernard, who often left his cloisters to found churches and save souls: neither S. Dominic nor S. Francis hid themselves in their convents. Like Dominicans and Franciscans, the Carmelites were mendicants by their Rule, and had therefore to pay in preaching the tribute to the Church due from mendicants. The reigning Pontiff had assigned them the whole world except Spain to found convents: if they founded in Italy, why not in Germany, Poland, Armenia and Persia, for instance, as well? Their journeys in Italy did not prevent them from devoting their days to prayer and communion with God, nor prevent S. Paul either: so why should journeys in Persia do so? Besides, their

¹ Called *Tractatus quo asseruntur Missiones et rationes adversae refelluntur*, O.C.D. 332 g.

very Rule authorized legitimate exceptions from the contemplative life. Was it not right that the Discalced Carmelite should forgo a little the delights of prayer and devote himself to the sanctification of his neighbours? To the second he retorted that all the greatest founders of Orders, and propagators of the Faith, e.g. S. Ignatius Loyola, had begun with a handful of helpers: why not therefore also the Discalced Carmelites? Was it not more deleterious to a community to be too many in numbers for the little occupation offering than the reverse? As to the third he suggested that, if S. Ignatius Loyola, S. Francis Xavier (to take modern examples of men of the world converted to the religious life) had stopped to consider that they were not sufficiently holy or such saints as had been S. Francis and S. Dominic, and so did not deem themselves worthy to go out and evangelize the poor, would they not have grievously injured themselves, their Order and the Church by depriving the world of the great benefits they have in fact bestowed on it? It was not, in fine, skill in dialectics, oratory in preaching, so much as knowledge of the Faith and doctrine, and piety and holy life, which were the armaments to gain the hearts of infidels.

Taken by the Commissary General and laid before the Pope, Clement VIII read this thesis and found it decisive for the future of the Congregation, repeatedly exclaiming to Fr. Peter:¹ "In Persidem! In Persidem!" (To Persia!). This was in the early summer of 1604.

All those of the Congregation of Italy embraced this decision with alacrity, to the extent even that in the Chapter General held in Rome the next year, 1605, all members of the chapter, from the Praepositus General to the most junior, offered their resignations and took a vow to go to the Missions for the conversion of infidels or heretics, whenever called upon by their superiors. Straightaway it was settled to found a seminary for those to be prepared for such work.

* * * * *

* * *

The Popes, Christendom and the Turkish menace

It is important to take note that Pope Clement VIII, in placing a mission in Persia, was doing so in the double sense of the word—if the Carmelites had solely in mind conversion of infidels, reconciliation of schismatics, preaching the Gospel in short, the Sovereign Pontiff was primarily using them as legates to forward his policy, which was to protect Christendom against the Turks by developing friendly relations and ensuring direct and reliable communications and negotiation with the ruler of Persia. In a sense these first Carmelites were not free agents, but doing another's bidding: and the importance for the reader lies in grasping this, and the dual role which lasted for many years and coloured their work and results accordingly: this dual role predominated in the first twenty-five years of their stay, but many times in the course of their story came to the front, and thereby altered their status in the country. To spend days in public attendance at the Court, to be with the Shah at his camps and follow his military expeditions, to drink and eat with him, ride on horseback, mix with the seculars from other European countries, above all with the Persian nobles, may have been unsatisfactory in the eyes of their Chapter General as being remote from the strict life expected of their Religious and, it will be seen, did call forth protest and visitatorial objections; but those worthy and capable fathers on the spot realized better that they must not refrain from doing their best in the guise of envoys to serve the interests of His Holiness, which would be in fact to render the highest possible service to the Faith, if such a course contributed to the overthrow of Turkish power and its terrible menace to Christianity at large.

Thoroughly to understand the need which Pope Clement found for political relations and negotiation with distant Persia in 1604 would require a historical treatise so long as to make a book in itself, for the skein is extremely tangled, as well as running back through several centuries—threads indeed might be traced from the Muhammadan conquest of Spain,

¹ Some writers of the Order have it that these words were written across the paper of the thesis.



POPE CLEMENT VIII

Palestine, Africa. Here only the outlines will be sketched, although the resulting story may appear disjointed to an extent.¹

A bare century after the Crusades, then, 'Uthman (1288 to 10.8.1326) first of the dynasty which was to be named after him, "Ottoman" Turks, son of Ertoghrlul of the Seljuk tribesmen from further Asia, became independent sultan after the fall of Konieh.² Second in succession after him, Murad I (or Amurath: 1359 to 15.6.1389) obtained by Genoese ships the transport of his tribesmen from the Asiatic coast, occupied the peninsula of Gallipoli and established them in Adrianople (1359-63). The sovereigns of Eastern Christendom with forces from Bosnia, Hungary and Serbia marched to rescue that city, but were surprised and routed, and Bulgaria added to the Ottoman possessions. Control of lower Serbia was gained after the battle of Kossovo, 1389, though Sultan Murad himself was mortally wounded. Under his son, Bayazid I, the "Thunderbolt" (Yilderim), the Christians made another strong but ineffectual effort to rid themselves of the Turks, French and German detachments swelling the host of the king of Hungary, which suffered defeat. Next Bayazid turned to resist the invasion by Timur the Lame, and in a battle near Angora his army was annihilated by the hordes from Central Asia, the Sultan himself becoming a prisoner, and dying one in 1403. After the civil war between the Turkish princes and respite from attack, Thessalonica, second city of the Byzantine Empire, once before and temporarily occupied in 1388 by Khair-ud-Din Pasha, fell in 1430 to the army of Sultan Murad II (May 1421 to 9.2.1451) who warred successfully against the Serbians and occupied Sofia and Varna. But the valiant Hunyady with an army of Hungarians, Poles, Serbians and other crusaders from the West under the Cardinal Julian Cesarini routed the Ottoman army, recovered Sofia, and the Turkish Sultan Murad II in a treaty of peace to last ten years had to surrender Serbia and Vallachia. The Christian princes themselves broke the treaty, and with the crusading Cardinal and Hunyady proceeded to attempt to wrest Bulgaria from the Crescent: Murad, however, fell on the Christian allies in the battle of Varna in 1444, when both the Hungarian king Ladislas and the Cardinal were among the slain. In 1442 the Turks had begun to devastate the Morea in Greece, and they were besieging Parga and Butrinto on the mainland opposite Corfu. Murad II died in 1451.

His son, Muhammad II, the "Conqueror" and "Padishah" (12.12.1451 to 3.5.1481) became master of Constantinople on 29.5.1453, when, after having invested the city in March, the Turks burst in and the last Byzantine emperor perished with the empire: and in 1469-71 he occupied the islands of Mitylene, Negroponte (which was taken from the Venetians by 120,000 Turks brought on 300 sail). In Greece the Peloponnesus submitted to him in 1462, Trebizond on the southern shore of the Black Sea in 1470, Bosnia and Vallachia, Scutari in modern Albania. Though he failed to take Belgrade, being driven wounded from the field by Hunyady, the rest of the Balkan peninsula was conquered, and in Asia Minor Anatolia as far as the Euphrates. In the last years of his life, 1480-1, he organized three great expeditions: against the knights of Rhodes (but the attack was repulsed): ambitious of subjugating Italy, he raided Otranto, but the Muslim soldiers left there were besieged, and compelled to surrender: finally against the Sultan of Egypt. In 1481 he died at Nicomedia. To him succeeded his son, Bayazid II (3.5.1481, died 26.5.1512, after abdicating) from whom in 1495 the Ionian islands, Cephalonia and Santa Mavra, were won back. In his reign began the power of the Turkish fleet, which gained the battle of Sapienza against the Venetians; but the Sultan made a truce in 1503 with the Republic, in order to devote himself to subduing Asia. He, however, and the rest of his house were deprived of life in May 1512 by his son Selim the I, the "Grim" or "Cruel" (May 1512 to 21.9.1520) who, first making peace with the king of Hungary and confirming that with Venice, fanatical Sunni that he was had thousands of

¹ The following historical resumé is based on the *Relazione* of Domenico Trevisiano, the Venetian ambassador, after his embassy to Constantinople, 1554, *vide* 'Fondo Pio,' 134, Vat. Arch.: on *Cronologia Calendario Perpetuo*, by A. Cappelli: on *Corcira Antica and Moderna*, by Luigi Ippeviz, 1901: and on *The Catholic Encyclopedia*.

² According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in his son Orkhan's (died 1359) time the Janissaries, the 'praetorian guard' of the Turkish Sultans, formed of children of Christian *rayas* taken from their parents, circumcised and educated as Muslims, was first formed. The Venetian envoy, Trevisiano, however, ascribes the formation to Murad II's reign (1421-51).

his own subjects suspected of heterodoxy massacred, and then on the same grounds proceeded in 1514 to attack Shah Isma'il Safawi of Persia, and annexed Azarbaijan. In 1517-8 he turned against Egypt on the pretext that the Sultan of Cairo would not have friendly relations with him, and after three victories in three successive battles made himself master of all Syria and Egypt (and so became "Khalif" of the Muslim world from 1518 onwards, receiving from Mecca the banner of Muhammad): Diarbakr and Mesopotamia also submitted. Taken ill and suffering from infection of a wound in the back he died at Chiarsu, near Constantinople, the very place where his father had perished of poison at his hand, it was said.

At the age of about twenty years Sulaiman "the Legislator" began, 21.9.1520, his long reign which was to last to 6.9.1566. It was ushered in by the fall of Rhodes and withdrawal from that island of the knights of S. John in 1522, and the conquest of Hungary, while his general, the noted Khair-ud-Din "Barbarossa" subjugated the Barbary States on the coast of North Africa the same year. Happily, the attempt to take Vienna in 1529 failed. At the end of August 1537 Barbarossa appeared off Corfu, the island of which had already been ravaged, and large numbers of peasants carried off as slaves, and there was none to prevent his landing some 25,000 Turks: on the 31st he assaulted the citadel, while Sultan Sulaiman waited on the mainland opposite and sent across as reinforcements 50 galleys with many thousands more men. The Turks, however, were constrained by the weather and malaria to raise the siege, which lasted only 15 days, though they carried off some 16,000 Christian prisoners, reducing the population to a miserable remnant. A naval battle in the gulf of Preveza (Epirus) between Khair-ud-Din and the Christian allies under the Patriarch of Aquileia with the Papal galleys, Cappello with the Venetians, who fought like lions, turned to the advantage of the Cross; but in 1539 the Venetians resolved to make a truce, and then peace, ceding their possessions in the Morea.

In 1542 Sulaiman began his third campaign against Hungary, and by 1548 the Emperor Ferdinand as the price of a truce for five years surrendered to the Turks Hungary, Transylvania, and an annual tribute of 30,000 ducats.

Following intermittent frontier hostilities between them, in 1553 Sultan Sulaiman in person at the head of a great force turned his arms against Persia; but in 1554 he returned to Constantinople, having accomplished nothing solid and wasted men. As the ambassador Trevisiano saw it, the expedition was

"a crowning mercy and respite for Christendom . . . as far as can be discerned with sound judgment, it has been a work allowed by our Lord God to free Christendom from the final ruin, with which it was threatened in the future, and perhaps rather to humble the spirit of those Turks so terrible to our people for many years past, in which they have always beaten them in battle and put them to flight . . . so that the name of the Turk has become so formidable that at the mere sound of it the whole Occident is dismayed. . . ."¹

The Sultan died while once more conducting operations in Hungary.

The eight years' reign of Selim II (6.9.1566 to 12.12.1574) saw Cyprus invaded and Nicosia taken—he claimed the island on the ground that it had formed part of the Byzantine empire—though the Venetian fleet was numerous: Famagusta, the last town to surrender, capitulated 18.8.1571. The Venetian commandant in Corfu, however, bombarded the Turks in Durazzo.

On 4.9.1571 Don John of Austria, natural brother of Philip II of Spain, anchored off Corfu, joining with Spanish reinforcements under the Marqués of Santa Cruz the allied Christian fleet: as generalissimo he forbade anyone on board to go ashore on pain of death. On 7.10.1571 the fleet (its other contingents were Papal under Marcantonio Colonna, Genoese under Doria, and Venetian under Barbarigo) came on the Turkish armada under Mu'izzud-din-Zadeh' Ali in the strait of Naupaktos (or Lepanto, as the Italians call it) which connects

¹ Vat. Arch. Fondo Pio, 235. *Relazione del Sr. Dom. Trevisiano, ambasciatore, tornato da Constantinopoli, l'anno, 1554.*

he bay of Patras with the isthmus of Corinth. At first victory seemed to smile on the Turks till Doria drove his ships at them, which encouraged a revived general attack. Of 200 galleys and 66 small ships the Turks had 18 sunk, 177 captured:¹ they lost some 25,000 killed and wounded and 5,000 prisoners, among them many governors of provinces: above all, 12,000 or 15,000 Christian galley slaves were freed. The Christian fleet, of about equal strength, lost 17 ships with 7,500 men (the history of Corfu cited gives the figure as 13,000). After the booty had been divided in Corfu roads, Don John, thenceforth the hero of Christendom, sailed for Messina, Colonna for Rome: no real effort was made to follow up this outstanding success, the attack being neither pressed home on the Turks in their own waters, nor in Cyprus by a relief of Famagusta or recapture of Nicosia from the Muslims: the Christians suffered from amine, the Turks remained with their conquests. After Lepanto both sides feverishly armed afresh: the Venetian commander, joined by 140 Papal galleys and some 34 other vessels, sailed out from Corfu, making for the island of Cerigo and searching for the Turkish admiral, who had as many ships under him. They came to skirmishes, but Foscarini avoided a general action and returned ingloriously to Corfu. At last, in September 1572, Don John of Austria appeared, and with reinforcements from Venice sailed to meet the Turks at Navarino (Greece). The latter, however, would not come out of their shelters, and with the onset of the bad weather season the Christian fleet was compelled to return. Except that Turkish naval power never recovered from the defeat, Lepanto was wasted as an opportunity for united Christendom to pass from defence to a general attack on the Turkish hold in Europe: Venice, indeed, making an isolated peace gave up its claims to Cyprus.

Sultan Selim II dead, his son, Murad III, then aged 26 (12.12.1574 to 16.1.1595) was fully occupied in consolidating his power and had no mind to break the peace with anyone in Christendom. In the six months of 1576 that the plague decimated Venice it did, however, more damage to the republic than the Turks had done in 18 years. When Sultan Murad III died, his son Muhammad III (16.1.1595 to 22.12.1603) continued his father's policy of peace with Venice, but in June 1596 revived a flagging war with Austria by marching into Hungary and decisively defeating the Archduke Maximilian in a three-day battle. The next reign, Ahmad I's (22.12.1603 to 22.11.1617), saw a peace signed between Austria and Turkey, 1606, and the annual tribute by the former discontinued.

By the end of the sixteenth century the Turkish empire had attained the zenith of its power on land; but from 1640 onwards, right till the end of the 1600's (as will be read during the course of the narrative of the Carmelite mission) the threat to the heart of Christendom more than once became menacing and alarming.

* * * * *

* * * *

To that two hundred year long onward drive into the heart of Europe, at times rapid and overwhelming at others intermittent, but always eating like a canker into Christian lands, to that evidently imperialistic aim of concentrating at Constantinople all power in the hands of the Sultans, successors of the great Byzantine emperors, on the one hand, on the other to the aim for setting up the Crescent and taking down the Cross from the houses of God, there was naturally a reaction in Europe: why it was relatively so weak and disorganized must now chiefly be taken into account.

Driven from Rome in 1309 the (French) Pope Clement V set up his court in Avignon, then an enclave possessed by the Holy See in the midst of French territory, and there his successors remained till in 1377 Gregory XI returned to Rome, the first to make his regular residence at the Vatican in place of the Lateran palace. When he died in 1378 and Urban VI, an Italian,

¹ Figures mentioned in an article of the *Osservatore Romano*, No. 69-23653 are: The Venetians had 114 ships, the Spaniards there were 12 Papal vessels, 3 each of the Order of Malta, the Republic of Genoa and Duke of Tuscany: 130 Turkish vessels were captured, 107 sunk on that fateful day: 40,000 Turks estimated to have perished, 8,000 been taken prisoners.

was elected in his stead, the French cardinals objected and proceeded to create an antipope, Italy, Germany, Hungary, Poland, England, Flanders yielding obedience to Rome, and France, Savoy, Scotland, with (later) Spain to Avignon. This—the great schism—lasted till 1417, when it was healed at the Council of Constance, and Martin V became the universally recognized Pope. Thus during the first fifty years of the Turkish intrusion into Europe the Popes were in no position to command the allegiance which would have been required to organize unity of resistance.

Under Eugenius IV (1431–46) a great attempt at the restoration of unity of Faith was made at the Council of Florence, and for a time augured well; but the fall of Constantinople in 1453 served only to accentuate the breach that reopened. Almost the whole brunt of resistance to the Turks during the fifteenth century fell on the republic of Venice, save that offered by Balkan Slavs. Spain in the latter half of the fifteenth century was entirely given up to the task of ridding itself of the Moors, and accomplishing its own internal union and, when the sixteenth dawned, had become interested in the exploitation of the recently discovered continent of America.

For Portugal Affonso de Albuquerque, who had sailed as an officer with Tristan da Cunha for India in 1506, made a notable effort to obtain mastery of the Red Sea for his country, seizing the island of Socotra, and then occupying the island of Hurmuz at the entrance to the Persian Gulf, where he landed 10.10.1507 and proceeded to raise fortifications. The attack was repeated the next year: Cochin annexed in December: Goa taken in March 1510. To prevent or impede other nations from challenging a Portuguese monopoly of trade with India in March 1513 he garrisoned, and gained a strong position in Aden: the conquest by the Turks of Egypt from 1518 vitally changed, however, the situation for centuries to come by creating a barrier to transit and intercourse for Christian nations between the Mediterranean–Red Sea–Indian Ocean, and Far East.

The early years of the sixteenth century saw the Christian states more occupied than ever with internecine rivalries, and their attention distracted from any common military action for the Cross against the Turks: it was the era of constantly changing political combinations centring largely round Spain and France respectively, and of trials of strength, into which various Popes were drawn by a desire to hold a balance of power between the two influences, and so themselves maintain an ascendancy in the councils of Europe. A few instances will suffice:

‘On 4.10.1511 the so-called Holy League was formed for the purpose of delivering Italy from French rule. In the beginning it included only the Pope (Julius II), the Venetians and Spain; but England joined it on 17.11.1511 and was soon followed by the Emperor and by Switzerland. When Julius II died, 21.2.1513, Venice formed an alliance with France for mutual assistance against the Emperor or against the Turks or for re-conquest of the duchy of Milan.’

‘Again in 1521 and 1525 Venice was the ally of France against Spain: subsequently that League was dissolved.’¹

It was not that, in the midst of trying to keep that balance, successive Sovereign Pontiffs were unmindful of those Christian peoples, the Faith and its shrines and fanes in the hands of the followers of Muhammad and suffering greatly, or that they neglected to warn and exhort the warring princes of Christendom. On the contrary their alliances began to take a crusading colour, and opportunities were not lost to encourage individual sovereigns to stem the Muslim advance.

Sixtus IV (1471–84) wrote “a letter of expostulation, in which mention was made of the peace concluded by Venice with the Turks at the very time that a league against the Turk was being negotiated.”

Innocent VIII (1484–92) addressed a letter to the Christian Princes stimulating them to

¹ *Vide Catholic Encyclopaedia*, VIII, 563 c., XIV, 264 c., XV, 338 c.: and Vat. Lat. 12205. Misc. Arm. XI, 149.

an expedition against the Turks, and gave instructions to Papal representatives abroad to exhort the kings of Hungary, Bohemia, Poland and adjacent countries in that sense. Alexander VI (1492-1503) dispatched "Instructions" to his legate to take steps "with Maximilian, king of the Romans, the electors, princes and whole German nation to join a confederation against the Turks."¹

On the Polish front, for instance, writing to Sigismund, King of Poland, 6.9.1515, Pope Leo X (1515-23), who had indeed made a treaty with the Emperor Maximilian against the Turks, referred to

"this specially favourable opportunity offering, as We have been lately advised by letters "of the Grand Master of Rhodes that the *Sophy, king of Persia*, who now for long past had "conceived a hatred against the Tyrant of the Turks, had delegated an envoy to him" (i.e. to the Grand Master) "to say that the latter should use every endeavour to report "to all Christians and to stir up them, both kings and princes, to take arms against this "same Turk, manfully and courageously, from our side. Because, if he shall perceive us "likewise ready and armed for this crisis, he" (i.e. the Persian king) "promised of his "own free will that he on his side likewise would rise and attack that enemy in hostile "array, and all the cities formerly belonging to the Christians he would cede to the Christians themselves to hold and possess. . . ."²

This was Shah Isma'il I.

Clement VII (18.11.1523 to 25.9.1534) was, however, to suffer the cruel reverse of being attacked in Rome itself by a force of mercenaries of the Emperor's party under the Connétable de Bourbon in 1527, and of seeing his people massacred, his city and churches sacked and half ruined: it was not permitted to him to make headway against the Turkish menace. But some ten years later, though Northern and Central Europe had fallen into the toils of the Lutheran heresy with its split in unity of faith between the sovereign princes of the Empire, divided henceforth into two camps, and with the concomitant loss of England owing to Henry VIII's private quarrel with the Holy See, Paul III is to be found busy with the

"Instrumenta ligae et foederis initi inter Summum Pontificem Paulum III, Serenissimum "Carolus Imperatorem Quintum, et Illustrissimum Dominum Venetorum, necnon "Regem Romanorum Ferdinandum ob defensionem Turci et ad offensionem illius. "Anno . . . millesimo quingentesimo trigesimo octavo die vero octava mensis Februarii " . . . Romae in Palatio Apostolico. . . ."³

(The Instruments of the League and Treaty made between the Sovereign Pontiff Paul III, the Most Serene Emperor Charles V and Most Illustrious Doge of Venice, as well as Ferdinand king of the Romans for a defence against the Turk, and offensive against him, 8th February 1538.)

Such matters as who should decide the relative authority of the generals of the three contingents, and be the arbiter in controversies which might arise, had to be settled—and in fact were settled in the choice of the Sovereign Pontiff—as also that the Spaniards were to be supplied with corn free, and that none of the parties was to make peace without consent of the others. Divergent aims and jealousies could hardly be brought into harmony: for instance, the Spaniards demanded a Crusade among other things, and before long this League was broken by the Venetians on the pretext that they were not given drafts of corn and victuals

¹ *Vide* Vat. Lat. 12205. Misc. Arm. XI, 149 in Vatican, p. 256 (reference to *liber* 23 f. 119, and to *liber* 29, and *liber* 55 p. 321).

² *Vide* Brev. Min. 1515-23 in XL, Arm. 4, No. 95, p. 57 Vat. Secr. Arch.

³ Vat. Lat. 12205. Misc. Arm. XI, 149 in Vatican, pp. 165-76 and refs. to *liber* 1 f. 28, and *liber* 8.

without payment or at a fair price. Actually, after the naval battle off Preveza (Epirus) previously mentioned, in 1539-40 the republic, considering its interests betrayed, made a separate and costly peace with the Turks, for some of its possessions were ceded, and it paid tribute for the islands that remained.¹ In 1555 articles of peace were signed between the Pope and King of Spain after the war over Naples. Though Philip II almost all through his long reign 1556-98 was at war—with England, or in that struggle with his subjects in the Netherlands (the rebellion of 1566 ending in Holland seceding in 1579 as a “Commonwealth of the United Provinces”) which exhausted Spain—and on the other hand much occupied with the affairs of the vast new realms of the Spanish crown in the New World, devoted churchman that he was, he was never lacking in any effort to establish the Faith *in partibus infidelium*: and, when that great Pope, Pius V (7.1.1566 to 1.5.1572) had been elected, it was not long before a strong combination was formed under his inspiration to challenge the Turkish advance. With the descent of the Turks on Cyprus in 1570 there was reason enough to move Venice to make common cause once more with the Holy See. Evidence may be noted in the references to, and account of the “League concluded and Articles of the year 1570 (May 25th)” beginning:

“As our most Holy Father, having received news that the most savage Tyrant of the
“Turks has invaded the island of Cyprus with a great war array . . .”²

and also in one account of the “Negotiations and proposals made in the Congregations held in Rome to settle the Capitulations for the League against the Turks between Pius V, the king of Spain and the Republic of Venice in the year 1571,”³ with

“Cardinals Morone, Cesis, Grassis, Aldobrandino, Alessandrino to represent the Pope: for
“the king of Spain, Cardinals Granvelle and Pacheco and Don Juan de Zuñiga, his ambas-
“sador: for the Venetian republic the ambassador Soriano, and at the end also Soranzo.
“To remove the difficulty over precedence in speaking the Pope summoned the ambassadors
“and handed them, so that it should be examined, a sealed statement of articles proposed,
“viz. to the end that the League should be perpetual, offensive, defensive—that it should
“be directed against the Turk and his dominions, although *the Spaniards wanted that there*
“*should also be specified the Sufi*” (i.e. the king of Persia), “the Moors, Tunis, Tripoli and
“Algiers. . . .”

There is further evidence in the ‘Articles of Capitulations between His Holiness Pope
‘Pius V and the Grand Duke of Tuscany for the fitting out of the twelve galleys of his
‘Highness for the object of the League, in March 1571’:⁴ in the ‘Instructions sent to the
‘papal legate in France, so that that country should also enter the League against the
‘Turks’:⁵ in the ‘Manifesto of the Pope to the Republic of Venice in re the Armada of the
‘League.’⁶

All this was work of organization and superintendence which was to lead up to that magnificent fleet sailing out under those famous captains of great name, Don John of Austria, Marcantonio Colonna, Giovanni Andrea D’Oria, for the decisive victory of Lepanto. Hereunder is given a parallel, but entirely different account of the launching of that campaign—by the Venetian ambassador and delegate Soriano—to show, on the one hand, how Pope Pius indisputably directed the councils of the delegates and, on the other, how uncertain and divided in 1571 was the militant attitude of Christendom towards Persia.⁷

¹ See *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, VIII, 563 c.: XIV, 264 c.: XV, 338 c.

² *Vide* Vat. Lat. 12205, Misc. Arm. XI, 149, p. 211.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 207.

⁵ *Idem*, reference to *liber* 33, fol. 49.

³ *Idem*, p. 231.

⁶ *Idem*, reference to *liber* 36.

⁷ *Vide* Fondo Chigi, II, 48, pp. 1-80 in Vatican Library, *Trattate conclusion della lega contra il Turco tra Papa Pio Quinto, Re Cattolico et Signoria de Venetia del Sigr. Michele Soriano 1572*.

"Persuaded by the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius V, the most Catholic king sent his commission to Cardinals Granvelle and Pacheco and his ambassador Don Juan de Zuñiga: and the Signory of Venice sent its ambassador Soriano to treat and conclude a League between the Pope, king Philip and the Venetians: their credentials were examined and considered sufficient.

"Having on the 1st July had summoned to his presence the king's deputies and the ambassador of Venice, the Pontiff addressed them words of great weight and full of prudence in the course of a long discourse on the actual state of affairs, on the difficulties in which Christendom stands, and on the steps which His Holiness, as the universal Father, had taken—first of all, to turn to God, to placate His wrath roused against us for our sins, and then to negotiate for the union of forces of the Christian princes against the common enemy, and principally those of the king and of the Signory of Venice. . . . He went on to speak of the kingdom of Cyprus, that it was necessary to use every effort to keep it in the power of the Christians, that it was the sole route to gaining the kingdom of Jerusalem and the Sepulchre of Christ. . . . Our Lord God, who will not abandon Christendom, and who in His wrath still does not cease from His mercies, has sent this opportunity to preserve that kingdom and gain others. He next said that, when this League had been concluded between the King and the Signory, the Emperor, as the first in authority among the temporal princes, would be invited to join it. . . . On the 2nd July there were summoned to the Pope's presence the king's agents and the ambassador, to whom His Holiness gave a writing, in the form of Capitulations, which had been sketched by His Holiness' representatives. On the 4th July, all the others (except the Cardinal Alessandrino, indisposed) being present and the ambassador, a beginning was made of the business in the name of the Holy Spirit. . . . The Venetian ambassador wished that more thought should be given to an offensive, because to stand on the defensive cost a great deal and aided but little: the real defence was to attack the enemy and deprive him of the way of attacking them; but it was decided that both one and the other should be set down" (i.e. in the articles) "as was done in the League of 1537. Next came up the third point, by Cardinal Granvelle, viz. against whom was the League directed, and he desired that it should be not only against the Turk, but against all Infidels, as the mandate from the king specified: and many other of the Cardinals deputed by His Holiness were of the same opinion, moved by respect for the Faith and because they knew that it would please the Pope . . . but the ambassador of Venice said that they were summoned only to deliberate against the Turk and that was what had been written to the Christian princes, and for that he had his mandate—whoever named other infidels was disturbing them from their principal objective, because it was not well to make suspect those from whom help might be had. . . . Cardinal Morone, thinking the same, said that *the Sophy* too was among the number of the infidels, and *yet it was hoped to have his aid.*" (Cardinal) "Granvelle" (i.e. as delegate of the king of Spain) "added that it was needful to make clear that the League was against the Turk and his other confederates, to name the Moors of Barbary and the Sophy, as they were tools of the Turks in doing damage to Christians. . . . It came to declaring the forces, and it was decided by all that these should be 200 galleys, of which 100 should be contributed by the Signory and 100 by the King of Spain, 50,000 footmen and 10,000 horse, as it was laid down in the former articles of agreement. . . ."

Lepanto won, as far as S. Pius V was concerned there would be no stopping and no truce, and up to the last months of his life he was working, as his predecessors in former centuries had worked for the Crusades, witness the document dated 11.2.1572:¹

"In the name of the Most Holy and Individual Trinity. Since, according to the

¹ *Vide* Vat. Arch. Misc. Arm. II, 116, Spagna, pp. 96-7.

"tenor of the Capitulations of the League, there have met in Rome, with due credentials,
 "in the presence of His Holiness our lord Pope Pius V,

"on behalf of his Majesty the Catholic king,

"CARDINAL PACHECO

"DON LUIS DE REQUESENS, grand commander

"of Castile, lieutenant-general of the

"Armada of His Catholic Majesty.

"and DON JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, his brother,

"ambassador of his Majesty at Rome,

"on behalf of the Signory of Venice

"Signr PAOLO TIEPOLO

"Signr GIOV. SORANZO,

"in order to consult and deliberate on matters pertaining to the war and enterprises *for*
 "*this year*, after having all together many times recognized the great debt by Christendom
 "and its princes to the almighty mercy of God through the most happy and miraculous
 "victory granted on the 7th October last past to the Christian armada against the Turkish,
 "so as to pursue the humiliation of the Enemy, all have agreed by the grace and help of
 "His divine goodness on the following resolutions:

"That the war and enterprises for this year should be carried out in those parts of the
 "Levant where it may be adjudged by the generals of the allied armada to be of most
 "injury to the Enemy, and greatest usefulness to Christianity and the allied princes: that
 "the armada of His Holiness should join that of his most Catholic Majesty in Messina
 "during the whole month of March, whence without loss of time they shall set out for the
 "Levant, and the armada of the Signory of Venice shall join them at Corfu. Number
 "of galleys specified in articles of League, 200: that towards the end of the month of June
 "there should be at Cape Otranto 11,000 infantry—1,000 from the Pope, 6,000 from the
 "Spanish king, 4,000 from the Venetians, to be set on board. . . ."

(The victualling was specified in great detail.)

But the great Pope died in May of the same year, 1572, and, though Gregory XIII and the Grand Duke of Tuscany

"signed articles on 23.7.1573 for the engagement of 12 galleys for the service of the League,"¹

in that year the Venetians once more deserted the pact to make peace with the Turks (*vide*, under Gregory XIII):

"his speech regarding the peace made with the Turk by the Signory of Venice in the
 "year 1573,"²

and the "Narrative concerning the Turks after the conclusion of peace with the Signory of Venice":³ again the opportunity for a combined drive passed away, and Europe slipped back into disunity.

With the rise to influence of the Reformed party in France a league on another basis and for another aim occupied the following Popes—that of Peronne in 1576, which aspired to become international—and its successor of 1585, to save Catholicism in France under the leadership of the Guises. Philip II of Spain by the Treaty of Joinville promised his concurrence and a large subsidy. After 1584 Pope Gregory XIII (13.5.1573 to 10.4.1585) approved of this league: his successor, Sixtus V (24.4.1585 to 27.8.1590) took sides actively with the leaguers, and in a Bull of 9.9.1585 declared that the Prince de Condé had forfeited the succession

¹ Misc. Arm. II, 116, p. 186, Vat. Arch.

³ Fondo Pio, 235. *Relazioni del Gran Turco, 1554-1583*, p. 120, Vat. Arch.

² Vat. Lat. 12205, p. 256.

to the throne of France, but after the murder of Henry III in 1589 was compelled to maintain an attitude of reserve. In 1588 Philip II of Spain had launched the great armada against Protestant England. With the election of Gregory XIV, 5.12.1590, the League and Spain recovered their influence at Rome.

After the death of the Cardinal King Henry of Portugal in 1580, partly by force partly by bribery Philip II of Spain secured election to the crown of Portugal at the Cortes of Thomar: for the next 40 years Portuguese possessions in India and interests in the East were governed from the Spanish Court. Hardly had the French internal and religious struggle subsided, and the seventeenth century opened, than the situation in Germany began to effervesce, and a German league came into existence with Duke Maximilian of Bavaria beginning negotiations for the formation of a union of the Catholic states of the Empire, a conference being held at the Imperial diet of Ratisbon, 5.5.1608: and the next year, 5.7.1609, the participating states concluded an alliance for the defence of the Catholic religion and peace within the Empire. The first general meeting took place at Wurzburg, 10.2.1610, all the principal states except Austria sending representatives: after that date the confederacy became really a Catholic league, with the Pope and Spain favourably disposed, and from 1613 Austria enrolled in it.

This was the prelude to the Thirty Years War, which, though peculiarly German and slightly later than the initiation of the Carmelite mission to Persia, was important for all Europe and about 1630 became a European conflict—one which will need to be borne in mind when causes of the slackening and cessation of attempts at collaboration against the Ottoman Sultans between the Christian princes, Holy See, and Persian kings come to be considered in so far as they affected the position of the Carmelites. By 1612 Venice, too, was at war with Austria and the Empire. Over the whole century there had brooded the rivalry between France and the house of Hapsburg: if the Holy See inclined to one for support and response in its call to rally Christendom against the Turk, it was sufficient to bias the other against participation: France indeed had its own deep religious cleavage to attend and heal.

The few preceding pages, in the outline, may serve to recall to the reader somewhat of the turmoil in Europe, the currents that distracted it from dealing radically with the Turkish advance and menace during and at the end of the sixteenth century, and as the seventeenth opened.

* * * * *

* * * *

The Popes, however, did not lose sight of it and whenever the opportunity offered, or the threat seemed graver, not only tried to stimulate and unite forces in Europe to meet it, but also worked diplomatically to secure support from the eastern neighbour of the Turks against them. Popes and statesmen had become aware of the differences of religious tenets, and the always latent, almost hereditary hostility of the two Muslim rulers and their nations, and conceived the plan of simultaneous operations on the eastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, so as the more readily to break the power of the Sultans and make them evacuate their conquests in Europe. To that end intercourse was opened between Rome and distant Isfahan—doubtless there had previously passed other letters, for the Republic of Venice repeatedly in the sixteenth century sent its envoys to the Persian Court, as also to that of the Grand Signor during years of truce, to watch the internal situation in each country, and their reports are detailed and thorough; but it must suffice here to quote the Brief¹ which Pope S. Pius V wrote to Shah Tahmasp I Safawi after the victory of Lepanto, calculating on that news having drifted across Asia Minor and creating a profound impression:

“To the illustrious Shaikh Tahmasp,² most puissant king of the Persians, We beg the
“enlightenment of the spirit of truth!

¹ S. Pio V. Brev. ann., IV-VII, Arm. XLIV, 19, p. 434, Vat. Arch. See appendix for text.

² The Latin is “Scieco Tahamaso”, perhaps “Shah” is meant.

"We do not doubt but that both by letters and messages from many people the report
 "itself will at length reach You of a remarkable and most glorious naval victory, hitherto
 "unheard of in the memory of man, which the allied Christian princes by the grace and
 "aid of the Almighty and most perfect God obtained in the fight which was joined near the
 "Gulf of Corinth against a very strong and numerous fleet of the most terrible and fierce
 "despot of the Turks, Selim the Ottoman, on the nones of the month of October last past.
 "Nearly three hundred galleys of the enemy, excellently built and equipped, together
 "with their commanders, all their soldiery, sailors, rowers, with their war material also
 "and all their cannon being in part captured, in part sunk, cut to pieces, routed and
 "utterly destroyed, very few escaping by flight from the battle. This indeed You will
 "understand to have been done by Divine Providence.

"For last year, when not without immense sorrow We heard that Selim with his unbridled
 "and insatiable greed for seizing other people's property (having for the sake of his innate
 "lust for ever wider domination broken the treaty, which had been entered into not long
 "ago by his father Sulaiman with Our beloved son, the noble Doge, and the illustrious
 "republic of Venice and afterwards had been ratified and confirmed by him on his having
 "attained to the most vast and formidable power of that empire) had most shamelessly
 "violated all laws of human and Divine justice and invaded the kingdom of Cyprus, the
 "ancient peaceful possession of the Venetians, with soldiers gathered together from all
 "sides, that he had with all the force of arms cruelly stormed the towns, plundered and laid
 "them waste, for the due fulfilment of the charge of the pastoral office laid on Us by Divine
 "Providence We considered that We must not delay to exhort vehemently in the Lord,
 "counsel and entreat the Christian princes, and especially Our dearest son in Christ,
 "Philip the Catholic king of the Spains, particularly pre-eminent and prosperous among
 "the rest from the size of his realms, the number of his doughty subjects, and the magnitude
 "of their huge wealth, to join with Us and the Venetians themselves, and that of one accord
 "with united forces We should strive to hold back the madly raging Tyrant and repulse
 "his nefarious enterprises.

"By this surely praiseworthy and beneficial counsel of Ours, by Our constant labours,
 "continued vigilance, tireless care and patience, by God's favour the desired issue has been
 "carried through and we have struck up an alliance between us no less desirable than
 "necessary, to the praise and glory of the Divine Name: not that willingly We resort to arms
 "and wars, for We are fosterers of peace and particularly zealous for it, but so that We may
 "crush and beat down the swelling necks of the proud.

"So great, therefore, and so wonderful a victory, as We have said, having been brought
 "about (not only for Christians but indeed for the kings and princes of the whole world
 "and most of all for You too, striving most keenly because of the ancient and implacable
 "hatred for the Ottoman race inherited from Your nearer and remoter forefathers, if You
 "shall not allow this opportunity to pass), We considered that it was right that You should
 "be informed at once with a view to the future and clearly, and for Your and Our common
 "advantage We earnestly recommend You to be willing to take the present occasion
 "offered suddenly by Divine Providence, and boldly and briskly to follow and embrace
 "smiling fortune, better than which will never occur, since at the very first opportunity
 "a strong army should be drawn up by You, and the enemy invaded from those eastern
 "frontiers, so that, while he lies stupefied and in consternation at the severity of the disaster,
 "it may be powerful enough to pay back somewhat and make good the damage and insults
 "too often deeply branded and inflicted by that wild beast of an Ottoman on the most
 "illustrious kings of the Persians, and that You may exert Yourself to get back and recover
 "Mesopotamia and Assyria, provinces which not so long before were subject to You and
 "which at one and the same onslaught were most unjustly seized by force by Sulaiman and
 "occupied. And indeed it can easily so turn out for You, since We do not consider that
 "Selim, as he has now lost command of the whole sea and is broken by the incredible
 "disaster of the defeat, when You would be fighting with all Your might in that quarter,

"while the Christian allies from our quarter would lead against him from Europe by sea
"and land very powerful and valorous forces, is able to sustain at one and the same time
"such mighty attacks, nor would he be in any way equal to it.

"Therefore may Almighty God, in Whose hands are the hearts of kings, inflame and
"rouse You courageously to embark upon grand and magnificent emprises and vigorously
"to conduct them: and may He kindly preserve Your state against the most covetous and
"terrible enemy of the human race, and may He deign to prosper and increase it by favour-
"able successes. All things will be set forth to You more extensively by him, by whom
"these will be delivered to You.

"Given at S. Peter's, Rome, under the Fisherman's ring, 16th November 1571, the sixth
"year of Our pontificate."

What happened in connection with that remarkable letter and invitation, written so promptly and intelligently, when the impression of Lepanto would be fresh in the bazars of Asia, appears to be revealed by two

"writings to promote the business of the Armada and League, and with the king of Persia,"

docketed and addressed

"To the most Serene Don John of Austria: memoranda of Matthias Bigudo Fontado,
"Naples, 2nd March, 1573".

The principal memorial¹ was worded:

"After the glorious victory which our Lord God gave Your Serene Highness over the
"Turkish armada, His Holiness Pope Pius V, now in glory, wished to send me with his
"letters to the king of Persia (whom they call the 'Sufi') since it appeared to him (as I
"had persuaded him) that it would be a very advantageous business to beg and procure
"that that most powerful king turn his arms against the Turk.

"I declined, as it appeared to me that to make representations of such importance more
"and higher authority would be required than I alone could carry, and that the commission
"could best be done by way of the Portuguese Indies. And so . . . His Holiness com-
"mitted the business to the king of Portugal, your nephew and my master, who to that
"end sent to the Sufi an ambassador, who carried letters from the Pope, from his Catholic
"Majesty, and from the King my master, with gifts and presents of much value for that
"monarch" (i.e. of Persia). "This ambassador, whom I mention, left Lisbon in the past
"March of 1572, and should have arrived in September in India and thence he would set
"out for Persia in the beginning of this current year: he may reach the capital of the Sufi
"in the coming month of April.

"But, seeing the uncertainties of sea-journeys, and the great distance of that route,
"for it to be known by it what the ambassador negotiated with the king" (of Persia), "I
"am of opinion that Your Highness should send by another route some person well known
"and, if possible, someone with an acquaintance of those parts, a man in whom Your
"Highness has confidence that he would be able to perform the duty suitably and who would
"speak the truth which (in my judgment) is what Your Highness has more than anything
"else to desire in him. He should be able to understand and speak very well one of two
"languages at least, Turkish or Arabic. He should take with him a letter from the
"Pope, and one also from Your Highness for the Sufi, and in them mention should be
"made of those dispatches sent by way of India, if they were sent. He should receive
"instruction in the matters which he has to treat with the Sufi, which will principally be to
"demonstrate to him the desire which His Catholic Majesty has always had of being able to

¹ Misc. Arm. II, 116. Spagna in Vat. Arch.

"communicate with him, and have an understanding with him, and consider him a friend.

"... (the king of Persia should be told) that, should he wish to take advantage and assistance from the opportunity, which he has of being able to injure the Turk his enemy, by allying himself with his Majesty" (i.e. of Spain) "not only will he more easily recover all that the Turk holds of his, unjustly seized, but he can even easily increase and extend greatly the limits of his realms . . . he can be promised that, if he move against the Turk, his Majesty will also cause the Christians and Arabs of Egypt and Syria to rise, and they could easily prevent any reinforcement from reaching the frontiers of Persia which the Turks might wish to send . . . (the King of Persia should be told) that Your Highness remains under way with the armada of the Holy League, which is the greatest and most powerful ever seen till today (in order to proceed against the Turk). . . .

"Your Highness sees and understands very well the importance of this business and the profit which will result to His Catholic Majesty and to all Christendom from the effect produced. The experience which I have of those parts is great, gained by the practice of many years, and I am very sure that with some little encouragement and help given from here to those discontented and oppressed peoples they would succeed with their own forces (which, when assisted, are very great) in freeing themselves to the enormous loss and hurt of the Turk and the incomparable advantage and gain of Your Highness. This, most Serene Prince, is what at present it seemed that I should recall to Your Highness,

"MATTHIAS BIGUDO FURTADO"

A second letter from the writer, dated 2nd April, 1573, gives the information that Matthias Furtado had been "for 16 years in Turkey in the service of the King, your nephew and my master": a third, written from Naples, 4.5.1573, contains the words:

"... and, if it be true that Theamas" (i.e. Tahmasp) "king of Persia be dead, and Isma'il his son have succeeded to the kingdom, I promise Your Highness that you will see him soon in the field with a most powerful army against the Turk, carrying with him and to him . . . the chiefest lords of the East, all great enemies of the Ottoman blood. . . ."

With all this isolated and unorganized zeal, however, that golden opportunity of the sixteenth century was allowed to slip past: Venice played false, and Don Juan de Austria was later to be sent to try his skill in taming the rebellious Netherlands, and there to close his chivalrous career. Under date 10.6.1579, in the pontificate of Gregory XIII, there were further efforts, and accompanying a letter for the Grand Duke of Muscovy the following instructions¹ went in cypher² from the Vatican to Mgr Caligari, nuncio in Poland:

"The news, which continue from day to day, of the frequent and great defeats inflicted by the Persian on the Turk, and the grand opportunity thereby offering to Christians to liberate themselves entirely from Turkish tyranny, cause our lord" (i.e. the Pope) "to add something additional to his wonted cogitations and desires for the welfare of Christendom. Among other matters taken into consideration by His Holiness is this that, as the king of Poland has in a number of discussions shown great alacrity to employ himself in the service of God and all Christendom, whenever the opportunity might arise, now would be the time for him to put into execution his most valorous and pious intention, since his Majesty does not lack the means of being able to execute it, both because he is strong in cavalry, and because he has an easy and open means of ingress into the vitals of the Turk through the countries of Vallachia and Moldavia. But, since His Holiness knows that this could not be carried into effect unless the king first make peace with the Muscovite, who, were he at peace with his Majesty, would himself only too willingly

¹ Vide Misc. Arm. 117, p. 130 Vat. Arch.

² Note the use of cypher in diplomacy at this period.

"turn his arms against the Turk in the direction of Caffa" (i.e. the Crimea) "and Perikop, "His Holiness has therefore resolved to send an embassy to the Muscovite in order to try "and persuade him to suspend hostilities in Poland and turn his arms as mentioned. . . . "His Holiness esteems his Majesty the most prudent and valiant king today wearing a "crown:¹ and so he desires and judges that this enterprise should be directed, guided and "controlled principally by the counsel and opinion of the king. . . . In executing the "instructions I know that you" (i.e. the nuncio) "will not forget any steps which might "persuade that prince, and everything which might be sought of him, because, besides the "great service that would be rendered to Christ our Lord, as much benefit would be derived "from it by the realms of the said prince in particular, as by whatsoever other Christian "prince: and, above all, you will not be silent about the *arrival now in Portugal from Persia "of a delegate from the Persian"* (king) "*to beg the Christian princes all to move against the Turk,* "promising them to remain steadfast in the hostilities: and that very shortly indeed "we shall learn details about that embassy, seeing that we have learnt of it only from a "companion of the envoy dispatched here by land by way of Hurmuz, his chief having "followed the longer sea-route. . . . we are already sure of the Catholic king" (i.e. of Spain) "who, although he was very near making peace or a truce with the Turks, none the "less by the persuasion of His Holiness has given up that idea and will show himself at "open war when he knows that he will have companions. The like we hope of the Vene- "tians, and the other potentates will do whatever His Holiness wants without contradiction.

"So your lordship sees that the salvation of the world today depends, it can be said, on "the decision that noble king" (i.e. of Poland) "will take, whom therefore you will have "to exhort, beg and adjure in the name of His Holiness to act in such wise as it is to be "expected from his prudence and piety, the more so because in any other manner the "world would believe that his friendship with the Turk was not forced, but a willing one, "based on true goodwill. For never perhaps will another opportunity similar to this be "seen for throwing off the mask and doing that which a good prince, generous and Christian, "ought—besides which in this way he will not only recover that part of Transylvania "which the Turk has wrested from him, but he will compensate himself for the losses "suffered by acquiring Vallachia and Moldavia and perhaps Constantinople itself. God "can do mighty things, and the person of his Majesty has not been raised to such estate "for trivial causes. . . ."

Perhaps an annex to the instructions to the nuncio in Poland in 1579, another and longer document is extant in the Vatican archives,² being an undated draft of directions for an envoy from Rome to Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh, which states plainly Pope Gregory's objectives:

"Arrived at that Court you will expound your embassy in this manner: that the Pope of "Rome, head and leader of all Christendom, whom the Emperor and the Christian kings "all obey, sends him" (i.e. the Shah) "greeting: and, having learnt of the victories which "he has had against Murad, king of the Turks, who is the enemy both of Christians and "of Persians, and being desirous that the fury (of the said Murad) should be checked, he "sends to *offer him* that of which he (the Shah) may stand *in need for continuing this war and "chasing the Turks out of Asia*, because His Holiness is sure of being able to do so much "in Christendom that, even though Persia be distant, he will yet find means of giving him "(the Shah) assistance, so long as it is known of what the latter stands in need, and by "what route the assistance can be sent.

"From the first reply of the king it will be understood whether he is disposed to continue "this enterprise already commenced, or on the other hand to make peace: because, should "he find necessary now to make peace, it should be possible to arrange one of two things

¹ Stephen Bathory, 1575–86, one of Poland's greatest kings.

² *Vide* Misc. Arm. II, 117 (116), Spagna, p. 135, Vat. Arch.

"—either that the king (of Persia) will fix in advance one year out of the next two or three, in which he pledges himself to renew the war, so that immediately His Holiness learnt by letters, or his men, that he (the Shah) is really set on doing it, he (the Pope) would procure the Turk being harassed by sea and by land, and would send into Persia all the assistance he could from every side—or else if his Highness did not wish to bind himself to that, he might limit himself to promising on his royal honour that, when the Turk moved either by sea or by land against the Christians in Europe, he (the Shah) would be disposed and ready to open hostilities in Asia. For, should he (the Shah) have given a binding promise for that, if the case arose, men would be dispatched with money, so that by means of this financial aid, which (as we shall state lower down) he will be able in each of the said two alternatives to have first received, he will know how to wage war with greater success than he is doing today, or any Asiatic king or prince has done in the past from the time of Timur-i-lang onwards.

"Should this prince condescend to make a list on paper, either in the one way or the other (seeing that to two heads are principally restricted all those things of which he might have need for the war against the Turk, i.e. money and offensive weapons such as artillery, arquebuses, and the men to serve and to make such-like arms), negotiations with him will have to be conducted in the manner specified below:

"As to money, it will be needful to see what he asks, because His Holiness would be confident of being able to find up to the sum of 100,000 sultanini yearly so long as he" (i.e. the Shah) "were making war; but from 100,000 upwards it would be necessary to go with caution. It is very true that, should the king promise to make war whenever the Turks should be about to open hostilities against the Christians, or have already done so, he could in such case be promised up to 150,000 scudi, and something over. Everything, however, that matters lies in disposing him to utilize this opportunity, and in gauging well how far capital can be made of his promises. And to conclude this section which concerns finance, it would be needful to ascertain whether he wants the money in ingots, or in Portuguese ducats, or in Turkish ducats. Above all else, there would be need to discuss the manner in which it should be dispatched and, in order that you may be able the more to facilitate the business, give notice that His Holiness will always be able to deliver the money in Muscovy within four months.

"Therefore, if the king has a good understanding and safe communications, even in time of war, with the Muscovite, you will perhaps find that the money can be speedily and safely delivered by that route. As for the artillery and arquebuses, should he want" (them) "in that too he will be made happy up to a limit of 2,000 arquebuses, and up to 5,000 or 6,000 hand-arquebuses, and up to 15 or 20 pieces of field artillery, provided he indicate the route by which they can be sent.

"Promises, however, are not to be made to him as absolutely certain, unless and until he make a return in one of three courses, i.e. either to continue the war already begun, or speedily to initiate a new one, or to harass the common enemy in Asia immediately he" (i.e. the Turk) "starts to harass the Christians by sea or by land.

"In the event of the king of Persia going on to speak of the union of Christians against the Turk, and showing that he considered it necessary and was desirous of it, the answer should be given him that to do this there was no easier method than the continuance of the war by Persia, and that, His Holiness having the intention of uniting Christendom against the Turk, in order to carry this out it was of moment that the king should have the means of continuing the war in Asia: and he" (the Pope) "was with good reason sending to know everything of which he" (the king) "might have need, and to offer him the help.

"Should it be the will of God that the king take this embassy in good part and wish to have sure and continual intercourse with the Christians in Europe (whence it may be deemed of great advantage to have prompt aid, whether in money or in offensive weapons, as specified above), you might be able to induce him to send with you someone who would

"come here incognito, and secretly confirm his promises and receive those needful. And "in this connection it is not superfluous to remind you that it had been stated here" (i.e. in Rome) "that in three months the king of Persia is able to be sure of getting" (a man) "from Tabriz to the capital of Muscovy: and therefore, as it is possible to travel from Rome "to the Court of the Muscovites in four months, you will open his eyes to how great an "extent commerce between Christendom and Persia can be facilitated and made familiar: "and you will know that all the benefit will accrue from your watchfulness and tact.

"The king of Persia has no room to doubt that all the wars which the Turk wages against "Christians are but in order to be able, once he has added to his own Empire by the ruin "of the Christian states, to crush also the Persian dominions. Now, since the peril is "common, common ought to be the remedy, which as it consists solely in a good under- "standing between the Christians and himself, and this appears to be hindered by moun- "tains, seas and jungles, and by lack of roads on the way, it would be no less necessary "than glorious an emprise for the grandeur of the spirit and name of this king and (what "is more of moment) for the safety of his kingdom that he should look to this, and should "add to the titles of his ancestors that of his Highness having known how to tame the "roughness of the mountain summits, and render them viable for human feet, just as did "not only Xerxes king of Persia, who cut through Mt. Athos and joined two gulfs of the "sea, but Hannibal the Carthaginian leader, who cut through very steep mountains.

"It is of great importance to know in what manner and degree the king of Persia claims "to have the Muscovite as a friend: whether he trust him, what facilities there be for "travelling from capital to capital, and the time necessary to do so. But in this also you "will be most vigilant.

"And, because it might happen that on your return you would come by way of Muscovy, "you will be given letters for that prince: besides what you may have happened to learn "in Persia regarding the understanding between these princes and conditions of travel, "you are instructed to investigate most diligently the mind and the strength of the Muscovite "in regard to fighting against the Turks, i.e. what are his intentions, and what forces he "possesses capable of being moved against the Turk, particularly should he see the Turk "harassed at one and the same time in Asia and in Europe.

"In the event in question of your reaching Muscovy perhaps, you are to find out all "that it is possible to do to effect peace between the king of Poland and the Muscovite. "And, as your prudence is taken for granted, it suffices to say to you that you will have "to employ every sort of stratagem to discover this. In conclusion of what has been said, "you are reminded that, should you be unable to ensure the continuance of the war by the "king of Persia against the Turk by means of the arguments, methods and offers set out "above, should God give you the grace to bring back at least this much that, as soon as the "Turk attacks the Christians whether by sea or by land, the Persian has given his word to "make war in Asia, and the Muscovite is willing to undertake an expedition against "Caffa, for which substantial assistance in whatever he asks would be sent to him too, "you would return having served God very well, and fully satisfied the pious aims of His "Holiness. . . ."

The joint attack, so energetically planned, did not mature; the king of Poland did not take action, presumably remaining at war with the Russians: and, if the principal Persian envoy did reach Lisbon, he must have found it difficult, if not impracticable, to make headway with the Persian king's own proposals, seeing that in 1580, on the death of the cardinal-king Henry without male heir Philip II of Spain laid claim to the succession to the throne of Portugal and enforced on the Portuguese an amalgamation of the two kingdoms.

However, from a totally different point of the compass, but always with the Ottoman sultan as the enemy, king Philip of Spain had begun to work in Persia, and through the viceroy of the Indies in the person of the Prior of the Augustinian Hermits at Hurmuz in the Persian Gulf, Fr. Simon of the Conception, had sent a representative to the Persian Court in 1582.

Three letters regarding Fr. Simon's mission are on record in the Vatican archives,¹ in Portuguese, Italian and Latin respectively.

On 20.10.1582 he wrote from Kashan to king Philip II that a few days before his arrival there had also reached Kashan an Armenian messenger, dispatched years before by the viceroy of Naples, Don Iñigo Lopez de Mendoza, in order to get news of Persia: and this man had offered a present to Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh so well received that it was decided by the Persian Court to send a present in return. The fleet had, however, already sailed for Portugal when the messenger came to Goa with that present, and the captain of Hurmuz, Francisco Mascarenhas, had requested him to turn back to Persia in company with Fr. Simon of the Conception, by whom from Kashan he was sent on with king Philip's letter to the Shah, who had then gone off to Khurasan, thirty days' journey distant. In a narrative appended the messenger in question, "a dweller in Hurmuz, vassal of his Majesty", gave a list of the presents sent by the viceroy to the Shah. At that time the Khan of Hurmuz, "vassal of His Majesty" (i.e. of Spain and Portugal) had died, his heiress being his sister, married to the Khan of Lar: and the latter proceeded to occupy several places round Hurmuz on the mainland, including Shamil, but had been defeated by the Portuguese. Fr. Simon had informed the writer that the *Shah desired king Philip would take hostile action against the Turks*. Tiflis, which had a Christian king, who paid tribute to the Shah, and had a daughter married to the son of the Shah (i.e. the future Shah 'Abbas), four years previously (1578) had been taken by the Turks.² A strong relief expedition had been sent by the Shah, and with the Georgians had cleared the country of the enemy, capturing 62 loads of coin and killing many.

In the letter to Pope Gregory XIII,³ also dated 20.10.1582 from Kashan, Fr. Simon of the Conception wrote:

"Be it known to Your Holiness that not long ago I was sent by the viceroy of the said province as an envoy or bearer of the letters which the Catholic king wrote to Shah Muhammad,⁴ emperor of the Persians, regarding a pact to be concluded between them against the common enemy of the Christian name. By God's will I have reached this town of Kashan, situated in the middle of Persia, where I have settled to winter, as I have learnt that the aforesaid emperor, the Shah, has left for a district very far off, and is like to remain there a very long time. After the report of my arrival in the town had been bruited, there soon came to me Joseph, a Jew by race speaking Spanish, who having often filled the office of letter-carrier to the kings of Portugal had arranged to make a journey to Europe.

"So at once I determined to write these present letters to inform Your Holiness that Shah Muhammad, the emperor of the Persians, has it in mind in no wise to slacken his warfare against the Turk, nor to arrange peace with him, and all the more so if he can know for certain that the sovereigns of Christendom will do the like, with regard to which he sent to the Catholic king an envoy, who on reaching Goa was unable to sail for Portugal, as he found all the cargo ships had already left for that country. . . ."

Evidence of further overtures to Persia during the pontificate of Sixtus V (24.5.1585 to 27.8.1590) has not been observed in the course of preparing the present compilation—that great pope directed his efforts to a rehabilitation of the influence of the Papacy in the councils of Europe, and the attack of the Spanish Armada on England was prepared and occurred in his time—nor in the brief reigns of the three next occupants of the Holy See. But with Clement VIII (30.1.1592 to 5.3.1605) relations became reciprocally active—Shah 'Abbas I was already settled on his throne: no less than twelve Briefs are catalogued as dealing with Persian affairs between 1600 and 1605. More detailed reference to some of those Briefs will be needed in due course.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

¹ *Vide* Misc. Arm. II, 117, pp. 130, 142 and 154, in Vat. Arch.

⁴ In Latin dative "scripsit *Xio Mahmetano*": "Caixao" = Kashan.

² *Idem*, p. 154.

³ See p. 76.

"It is to be feared"—naively and unappreciating opined the writer of the article on "Persia" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, tenth edition, 1893, when alluding to the wars and relations between Turkey and Persia during the period of Sulaiman the "Magnificent" and Shah Tahmasp—"it is to be feared that the intrigue of European Courts as well as religious fanaticism probably contributed to stir up mutual hatred" between the two monarchs and their countries! Rather the pity was that the European Courts on various favourable occasions failed to combine to extirpate the Turks, and free oppressed Christian populations in Europe and Asia Minor: and the writer in question might have been the more shocked to learn that the intrigue or pressure came almost as much from Persia on Europe as vice versa, as has been briefly indicated in these pages, from the sending of the envoy by Shah Isma'il I to the Grand Master of Rhodes in 1515 to the dispatch of envoys in the reign of Shah Khudabandeh. In 1599 'Abbas I deputed Husain (or Hasan) 'Ali Baig to accompany Sir Anthony Sherley to the Courts of Europe with

"certain general articles regarding which the king of Persia has caused negotiations to be conducted with the Emperor and the Christian princes through his ambassador Antony Sherley, a knight of England, as concerning the war against the Turks."

Those "articles"¹ begin by

"the King of Persia offering his friendship and goodwill to all the Christian princes . . .
 "incited to this present friendship . . . by hatred of the common enemy, the Turk, against
 "whom his Majesty will shortly begin to war, if only assured that all the weight of the
 "war will not fall on his shoulders. . . ."

It is, however, in the general history of Persia from the beginning of the Safawi dynasty that the *animus* against the Sultans of Turkey and the Ottoman Turks in the minds of its sovereigns, almost without exception and shared doubtless amply by their subjects, is revealed, stark enough to show that they stood in no need of prompting and incitement from Europe to war against the Turks—the feud went too deep to be allowed to heal, or remain dormant save during brief periods of truce which marked reigns of indolent or unwarlike kings on one side or the other: and this story of the Carmelite mission will demonstrate how exasperated 'Abbas I became at times at the failure of quarrelling Christian states to unite and join him in crushing absolutely the Ottomans. In 'Abbas' long reign his was the will to war more even than that of Europe.

Even before the rise of the Safawis the ruthless conqueror, Timur the Lame (died 1405), had come into conflict with the growing power of the Ottoman Seljuks, for he had overrun Mesopotamia, the Caucasus, Syria and Asia Minor, penetrating to Broussa and Nicaea and almost to the Bosphorus. His son, Miran Shah, viceroy over part of the Persian dominions of Timur, lost Baghdad and it was left for Isma'il I Safawi to recover it, together with Mausil and other positions on the Tigris in 1503.

The male line of Timur ceased to rule about 1468, being supplanted by Uzun Hasan of the "White Sheep" Turkmans, who with his descendants held the chief power only till 1500, when Isma'il I the Safawi defeated and slew them. During the fourteenth century a certain mystic and pious devotee, named Shaikh Saif-ud-Din Ishaq, of the lineage of Muhammad through the seventh Imam Musa, was resident at Ardabil: and after him his son and grandson maintained a reputation for sanctity which was greatly enhanced by the fourth in descent, Shaikh Haidar, whose "Sufi"² and heterodox doctrines spread far and wide, and accentuated

¹ Vide *Lettere di Principi e Titolati, 1596-1605*, No. 54, p. 141, Vat. Arch.

² From "Sufi" (the "Sophy," as Europeans styled the Shahs of the dynasty) comes the plural form, Safawi, by which the dynasty is distinguished. According to Fr. du Cerceau's edition of Fr. Krusinski's *Memoirs* it was the first of these Shaikhs who, "in order to distinguish the followers of 'Ali from other Mussulmen made an order that, instead of linen turbans commonly worn by Mussulmen, the others should wear a red woollen cap with twelve folds in memory of the twelve Imams: and it is on account of the colour of their turban that the Turks call them Qizil-bash = 'red-heads'."

that revolt from the prevailing Sunni form of Islam, which gives the Persians a nationalist, as well as a distinctive, creed in the Shiah tenets. Shaikh Haidar had married a daughter of Uzun Hasan, the "White Sheep" Turkman sovereign (who had taken to wife a daughter of the Komnene "emperor" of Trebizond), and eventually was killed in battle or murdered by a Turkman prince, relative of his wife.

Isma'il, third son of Shaikh Haidar, was not a mystic, but a born warrior and commander of troops. When still a boy from his place of refuge, with a small number of men, he made a raid and captured Baku on the Caspian Sea and Shamakha in the Shirwan district of the Caucasus. Then he collected a larger force, marched on neighbouring Tabriz and was acclaimed Shah in 1499: that year he defeated and suppressed his "White Sheep" opponents, who had received Turkish aid. Sultan Selim I of Turkey, surnamed the "Grim" or "Cruel", was a fanatical Sunni and shortly after his accession in 1512 ordered the slaughter of all Turks suspected of having lapsed into heterodoxy, and the number killed is said to have exceeded 40,000. That action brought forth from Isma'il of Persia, who was hereditarily the religious leader of the 'liberal and lax' school in Persia, as well as Shah, a protest, which in turn was countered by a declaration of war from the Ottoman Sultan: the latter had the additional grievance that in 1503 Shah Isma'il had captured Baghdad and Mausil. Selim's army advanced into Azarbaijan and western Persia, and, though Shah Isma'il followed the typical Persian practice of devastating the border country simultaneously as he retreated, near Khui on the western frontier of Azarbaijan a battle was fought in 1514 (at Kaldaran), resulting in the rout of the Persians and taking of Tabriz by Selim I who, however, almost immediately returned to Constantinople, having annexed the provinces of Diarbakr and Kurdistan. (It was at that juncture that Shah Isma'il made his spontaneous overtures to the Grand Master of Rhodes, cited previously.) After the death of Selim I in September 1520 Shah Isma'il overran and subdued Christian Georgia, but on Sunday, 18th Rajab 930 A.H. = May 22nd 1524¹ he died at Ardabil at the age of 45—according to Krusinski's *Memoirs*, on a pilgrimage to his father's tomb. According to Purchas,² his subjects deemed him a saint—so enthusiastic were his soldiers in their faith that they used to bare their breasts to their enemies and court death, exclaiming "Shiah, Shiah".

The eldest of his four sons, Tahmasp, then aged 10 years 6 months, 20 days,³ succeeded as Shah, being crowned 23rd May 1524, the day following his father's death; and in his reign in 1528 Baghdad was recovered from a Kurdish usurper, only to be wrested from Persia by Sultan Sulaiman the "Magnificent" or "Lawgiver" in 1534, after a new invasion of Persia by the Ottoman armies. (In 1537 Kandahar, nowadays part of Afghanistan, was lost for a time, and occupied by the garrison of the Emperor of Delhi.) Professor Creasy is the authority for the statement that Sultan Sulaiman led his armies against Persia in several campaigns, e.g. in the years 1533-4-5. Fr. Krusinski, in the edition by Fr. du Cerceau of his *Memoirs* (1740), confirms this with the details:

"In 1534 Sulaiman . . . advanced as far as Tabriz, which he took without committing "any disorder in it. Thence he advanced to Sultanieh, a city which formerly was the "residence of the kings of Persia. . . . Halting for some time in the neighbourhood of "that town, Sulaiman was dislodged by one of the most furious storms of which history "makes mention. He returned towards Assyria, where he made himself master of Baghdad, "and caused himself to be crowned king of Persia by the Khalif of that city. . . . After "this conquest all the cities of Assyria and Mesopotamia opened their gates to Sulaiman, "who also reduced Kurdistan and Diarbakr. He spent the winter in Baghdad, and with "the reinforcements of the troops that came to him from Egypt and Syria he returned "towards Tabriz. As he left Tabriz this year, 1535, Tahmasp made such great spoil in all "the neighbouring provinces that the enemy's army being almost starved was obliged to

¹ and ³ See E. G. Browne's *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in Cambridge University Library*, 1896.

² Quoted by *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed., 1893, from which the facts and dates in this summary have been taken

"quit Persia. . . . Tahmasp . . . gave the command to Deliment [*? sic*], a brave Karamanian, who pursued and overtook the Turks near Bitlis, on the left side of lake Van on 13.10.1535, when surprising them in the disorder of retreat . . . he cut them to pieces, and gained one of the most complete victories over them that the Persian ever had over the Turks. Though Sulaiman had taken Assyria and Mesopotamia from Persia, these conquests cost him so dear that he repented he ever undertook them, and at his return to Constantinople put to death Ibrahim Pasha, his favourite, who had been the instigator of that war. It is reckoned that out of 500,000 men who passed the Euphrates to attack Persia not 80,000 returned to Constantinople.

" . . . Peace till 1548" (when one brother of Shah Tahmasp had rebelled and allying himself with the Turks caused open warfare to break out afresh). . . . "Sulaiman took the field with an army of 200,000 men. Tahmasp, who had above 100,000, having obtained from the Portuguese . . . a body of 10,000 men of their race with 20 pieces of cannon, met the Turks on the bank of the Euphrates, whom he attacked in person and by the valour of the Portuguese entirely defeated. Sulaiman himself, who was wounded in this battle, lost 130,000 there. . . . This battle was fought in 1549. . . ."

Then in 1553 came a fresh expedition to Georgia, which Isma'il I after the death of Sultan Selim I in 1519 had overrun and subdued.

In the second half of the fifteenth century several representatives of the republic of Venice wrote accounts of what they witnessed and recent history in Turkey and Persia, which are of much interest. Some extracts from copies in the Vatican archives will help the reader to realize somewhat conditions in those Muslim countries, the despotic rule, and constant warfare: and, firstly, in exposition of the cleavage and enmity enduring between Ottoman Turks and Persians, the scene will be surveyed from the Turkish angle. The ambassador Domenico Trevisiano, who returned from Constantinople in 1554, thus describes¹ the Sultan and his sons: Sulaiman, surnamed the "Magnificent", and by the Turks "Lawgiver" or "Legislator", who had succeeded in 1520 at the age of about 20 years, was:

" . . . in stature tall rather than of medium height . . . he was of grave mien. He had been considered to be humane and benign in character, but now there are many who think the contrary on account of his having put to death his own son and grandson. his Majesty has had five male children and one daughter. One was Sultan Mustafa, who was born in the year 1516 of a Circassian woman. . . . The other four were borne to him by the present Sultana, who is from Russia, whom his Majesty has so greatly loved in that not only did he wish her to be his legitimate wife and retain her as such in his saraglio, but according to rumour he has never since wished to have another—a thing never known of any of his predecessors. . . . Of these sons the first was Sultan Muhammad, a youth very graceful and beloved by his father and mother and all those who knew him, both because of his handsomeness and for his habits, since he was of a humane and liberal nature, who . . . in the year 1542, when he was about 20 years old, departed this life in his *sanjakate*" (governorship) "where he had been sent by his father, and he was buried in Constantinople, his tomb being honoured by his father and mother with a very sumptuous mosque built in his name, a thing which had not happened before, it being customary for all sons of the emperor to be buried at Brusa.

"The second son is Sultan Selim, aged about 30, who was some years ago sent to govern the *sanjakate* of Magnesia, and who at present is in the saraglio with his Majesty. The third is Sultan Bayazid, aged 28, who was sent to the *sanjak* of Catai (?) in Caramania. . . . and now by his Majesty's order is governing Adrianople. Both of these have sons. Sultan Selim is corpulent, and given over to wine and women: Sultan Bayazid is of delicate frame, and studious; but neither the one nor the other has the name of being a

¹ Fondo Pio, 134, *Relazione del Gran Turco, 1554-1583*, p. 1 (235), Vat. Arch.

"great soldier. They have not yet gained the love and confidence of the people, or of the Janissaries, as Sultan Mustafa has done. The fourth son was Sultan Jahangir, aged 24, who last year in the month of November departed this life in the town of Aleppo, where he had gone with his father on the expedition against the Sufi" (i.e. the king of Persia): "he was of a pleasant nature and with it of poor health, besides being hunchbacked and by his looks unworthy to have charge of the government. . . ."

Then there is another account¹—the name of the writer was not copied, but it is likely to have been Daniele Barbaro, who was in Aleppo throughout the campaign of 1553–4:² and the fact that the "Grand Signor" himself had made that city his headquarters, together with large numbers of his troops, gave this Venetian observer special access to the facts. At that date the frontier between Persia and Turkey was as follows:

"From the Amanus mountains to the Persian Gulf the river Tigris is the boundary, all to the west being in the Turkish empire, to the east in the Persian, with the exception of certain castles in the mountains dividing Mesopotamia from Greater Armenia held by the Kurds. . . . The town of Van had been taken by the Turks from the Persians in the expedition of 1548. . . . Shirwan was subject to the Persian king, and for the most part the Georgians or Iberians were tributary to, or allied with him. The Turks had three frontier towns of great importance. Ersinjan, Van and Baghdad: the chief position of importance in the hands of the Persians was Tabriz, where the Safawi king had his capital. . . .

" . . . Eight days' distance to the north of Nakhchiwan was the district of Shirwan, and on the banks of the Araxes there was the fortress of Kars, which had been destroyed and pulled down by the Persians, the stones being even carried a long distance away, so that the Turks should not fortify the place with artillery. . . . After taking Van in another expedition, 1548, Sultan Sulaiman had decided to abandon any further operations in this direction, in order to deal with the situation in Transylvania and Hungary which was troubling him; but, in order not to leave the country without a strong guard, and to safeguard his conquests in the East, he placed one Baiglarbaigi³ in Van, with a company of soldiers to defend the town, another Baiglarbaigi he stationed in Karkamish near the Antitaurus mountains between Van and the river Euphrates, and a third in Erzerum with a larger garrison than the other two: and because this place was of greater importance to his position, and more harassed by the Persians he posted there a man of standing, named Iskandar Agha, who had had charge of the provisioning of the army . . . putting under him eight sanjaks. . . . When the Grand Signor had left (for his capital), this Baiglarbaigi left at Erzerum, desirous of adding some territory by conquest to his master's dominions, began to raid the borderlands of Persia so that for a considerable distance there was not a house to be found, all the inhabitants having been either massacred or carried off in slavery, or having fled into the interior. This Baiglarbaigi proceeded to erect a fort to dominate and keep in subjection the territory won (in order to push his cavalry farther on to raid, thinking thus to occupy the enemy's country); but Shah Tahmasp penetrating his design and determining not to permit this fort to be begun by the Turks, gave his second son, who has the name of his grandfather, Isma'il, and who is very courageous, an army of some 20,000 picked mounted men, instructing him what to do. Isma'il went and, as directed by his father, suddenly assaulted those who were at work on the fort begun, and destroyed it all. The greater part of the Turkish force guarding it were

¹ Pol. Var. Misc. Arm. II, 75 (74), p. 1, *Relazione delle cose del Turco col Sofi di Persia*, Vat. Arch.

² Though from another manuscript account at the Vatican (Fondo Chigi, II, No. 48, p. 335: "Report regarding the King of Persia of the year 1553, transcribed from an original of the late Sigr Fulvio Ruggieri, of Bologna, by Giovan Francesco Scardova of Bologna on the 24th November 1597, in Rome") the identical wording of a section relating to the boundaries between the Turkish and Persian empires might make it seem that Fulvio Ruggieri were the author of the narrative in Pol. Var. Arm. II, 75; the latter was presumably a Venetian, not a Bolognese, however.

³ In Persian pronunciation, *Beylerbey* in Turkish.

"quickly routed and most captured, with them three *sanjaks* (? captains), whom he had "put to death very cruelly, one roasted alive, one quartered into four pieces, and the third "sawn in two. After this enterprise, Isma'il pushed on with his men towards Erzerum, "in which town was Iskandar Agha the Baiglarbaigi with a quantity of cavalry: but the "latter, who had learnt of the sudden attack by the Persians on those at work on the fort, "not knowing how many the attacking force might be, did not leave the town. Hoping "to bring off a fine coup the Persian contrived to keep the greater number of his men in "ambuscade, and appeared in sight of the town with but few, hoping by this means to "draw the Baiglarbaigi out of the town into the open country. Just as he had planned, "he succeeded, for the Baiglarbaigi, seeing that the men who had appeared in sight of "the town were few, so as not to allow them to raid the countryside, sallied out and made "two squadrons of the men he had ride with him. . . . When the Persians saw the Turkish "troops outside coming against them, they drew themselves up to fight and began a skir- "mish, but after a short time feigned flight. Thinking to have routed them, the Turks "pursued, and the Persians drew them so far on that they led them into the ambush. So "the Turks being in the midst of so many soldiers, at least three times more numerous, and "incomparably braver, were for the most part cut to pieces, save some captured, and the "Baiglarbaigi fled away wounded and badly handled with another seven men of his who "followed him until they were able to save themselves by throwing themselves down into "the fosse round the walls of the town, having no time to enter by the gate. Having "accomplished this feat, the Persians camped under the walls, but seeing later that they "were unable to take it by storm and that winter was coming on them they took to devas- "tating all the countryside, and laid everything waste on a vast scale, leaving nothing that "could be burnt and destroyed, taking away men and animals, as many as they could "carry off. After they had laid waste that region they went raiding round Ersinjan. . . . "Similarly they devastated the district of Van, and then entered that of Diarbakr, raiding "and ruining the country until near Baghdad they turned back to their own land. . . . "The extent of the regions laid waste by the Persians is thirty days' journey in length "and about eight in depth.¹

"Informed by the Baiglarbaigi of Erzerum of the ruin and hurt which had been caused "by the Persians, and the fear in the countryside of further depredations, the Sultan dis- "patched the Grand Vizir, Rustam Pasha, his son-in-law, with a force of 80,000 men and "800 Janissaries under their Agha, who left Constantinople in September; but, the policy "of Rustam Pasha being to remain never far distant from his sovereign, so that in case "of the latter's death he might contrive that one of the sons of the favourite Sultana succeed "to the crown, which rightly would come to Sultan Mustafa as first-born, who had been "born of another wife and for various causes was a great enemy of the Pasha in question, "he moved off on the expedition unwillingly and slowly, halting now in one place now "in another, so that only in the month of November did he arrive in Konieh, a town "situated in Lycaonia . . . where he received letters from Constantinople informing "him that Sultan Sulaiman was seriously ill, and in such fashion that there was scant hope "of his recovery. . . .

"Mustafa was so greatly beloved by all the soldiers of the empire that every one of "them desired nothing more than that the sooner the opportunity would come about for "him to succeed to it: and this was derived from the rare virtues by which he had captivated "and drew the hearts of people to esteem, love and revere him, and the more particularly "because of his great liberality and humanity.

"By the time Rustam Pasha reached Constantinople the Sultan had got better and "recovered. . . . Later the Grand Signor caused war against the Sufi" (i.e. Persia) "to "be proclaimed in Constantinople, and announced his intention of proceeding in person

¹ This would, if literally exact, mean a front of some 450-500 miles and a depth of 160. Throughout this account they are called not "Persians," but "Suffiani" and "Sophiani"—"Sufi-ites," indicating how notorious in the eyes of the Turks were the tenets of their kings.

(on the expedition); "but first before moving off he settled matters with the King of the Romans by effecting a truce.

"Well divining the purpose of the Turks to make war on him, the Shah of Persia made careful preparations for defence, but in order to delay the Turkish plans he dispatched to Constantinople to treat of peace a Turkish officer, whom he had prisoner, in reply to which the Grand Signor sent off an officer (*sanjak*) to the Persian king with authority to discuss terms of peace and conclude it, without, however, stopping to make his preparations for war for all that. When the Turkish officer reached the Persian Court and the Shah learnt the demands of the Turks he at once dispatched an ambassador to Constantinople with presents of value to be offered to the Sultan and all his 'Porte'. This ambassador arrived at Constantinople on the 19th of the month of August (1553), tendered the presents, kissed the hands of Sulaiman, and was graciously received by him; but he was given no time to inform the Pashas of the reason for his arrival. On the 28th of that month Sultan Sulaiman, after his custom when setting forth to war, quitted Constantinople with much ceremony and crossed to Scutari in Anatolia, opposite Constantinople, where by his command there had previously been conveyed all the 'Porte' and his European troops together. On the 29th August he marched off with the whole army, giving orders to go into winter quarters in Aleppo, a town of Syria, in order in the new year to be the nearer to the enemy, the Persians. He celebrated the festival¹ on the 10th September at Nicaea, and when that was over set out for Konieh, and, when he reached the pass which leads to Amasia, he dispatched some of his *chaoushes*² to summon his son, Sultan Mustafa, giving him to understand that he wanted to send him on the expedition against the Persians by way of Erzerum.

"The poor, unfortunate prince received his father's letter and, when he had learnt the latter's summons, communicated it to those most dear to him, who counselled him in no wise to proceed and obey it. When it reached the ears of his mother, who from the hour that this son of hers left the saraglio always dwelt with him, being of the like mind about such a journey she counselled him against it. But for no advice given him would he be turned from going whither destiny was drawing him, saying that he wished to obey his father: and, having taken thought for everything and prepared a valuable gift to offer his lord father, he set forth on the way. I shall not omit to narrate the inauspicious augury which two of his horses provided for him in the hour when he wished to mount on horseback, and how, when he had got up on a stand, about an arm's length in height, which these nobles are wont to use in order to get to horse the more comfortably, and his *mirak-hur-bashi*" (master of the horse³) "wanted to bring up to him a very fine horse of his which he was often wont to ride, as if in foreboding of what was to happen to his master this horse would not once come near the block when he had got up, nor did it avail all the efforts to bring it near which his grooms made. . . ."

(A second horse acted similarly.)

"Sultan Mustafa set off on the road on the 6th October, and, arrived at the camp which was situated on this" (i.e. the Aleppo) "side of Konieh in a place called Erekli, his pavilions were set up two miles distant from those of his lord father.

"Almost immediately the side walls of his tent were up, from the direction of the camp an arrow was shot inside them, and round the arrow was found a letter written, warning him not to present himself before his father, because the latter meant to have him killed. However, it was his will to go, deeming that this was a trap by Rustam Pasha to cause him to become guilty of contumacy towards his father. His most faithful servants, who had learnt of everything, did not cease from telling him that in such premises he ought to use greater reflection, and that, if he should be set on going into his father's presence, he should do so on horseback in the open country where he would be seen by all. . . .

". . . He set forth clothed in white and silver above, and under it a cramoisy velvet,

¹ This festival would be 'Aid-i-Fitr, 1st Shawwal at the end of the fast of Ramazan, 960 A.H.

² A *chaoush* is a sergeante.

³ Literally in Persian, "head master of the mangers".

"on a magnificent horse trapped with jewels, and he and his horse being excellently well together, and as he was very handsome in figure and looks, it was a beautiful sight to see. When the unfortunate son reached the pavilion of his father he dismounted, leaving his horse in the hands of his *mirakhur-bashi* . . . and then unbelted his sword, leaving it in the first tent, which he did because it is not lawful for anyone, when he goes to kiss the hands of the Signor, to go with arms belted on. From the first pavilion he passed into the second, in which he found no one, and then, having entered the third, met there the 'Capigliar Cagagia',¹ who said to him, 'Wait, lord, just now you will enter'. He did not have to wait long before a sign was made that he should enter, and having entered the fourth pavilion he saw his father seated, having in his hand a bow drawn. When he had made obeisance the latter answered the greeting by saying: 'Ah, dog! hast thou still the daring to greet me?', and forthwith turned his back, which was the sign which he had given to those whom he wanted to slay him (Mustafa). Immediately the Capigliar seized the throat of Sultan Mustafa in his hands saying: 'Do not move, for I shall do what I am doing by order of the Grand Signor', and at the same time three mutes who were present threw themselves on him, putting a bowstring round his neck to strangle him. In their pulling it that cord broke: and in that wise the miserable man slipped out of the hands of those who had seized him, as he had thrown to the ground some of them; but having turned to flee he stumbled over the front part of the robe he wore, in which his foot got entangled and he was about to fall while at the same time the Capigliar Cagagia caught hold of one foot and caused him to fall altogether to the ground. The other men of the Sultan, who witnessed this, were pushed down on top of him, and having gone for him with another bowstring in their hands put it round his neck. But he put his arm between the bowstring and the front of his neck in such a way that by the tightening of the string he could not be strangled. The Sultan said: 'Take off his skull-cap, because while that encircles his head, you will never be able to put him to death.' This the Sultan said because these people wear on the skull-caps, which are small cotton caps, which they wear under the turban they have, certain characters in writing which in their superstition they consider to be of such virtue that so long as those written characters touch the skin of anyone he can never be put to death by violence.²

"The Capigliar Cagagia took it off his head and held it out to the Sultan, who hung it up on one side of the pavilion, and the other three men placed the third bowstring round his neck. This was the last they had, one for each mute, against which the poor young man struggled, tucking his beard into his chest, so that the cord came on to his chin. But those fellows by force pulled up his head, and caused the cord to fall round his neck and, pulling on it, they deprived of life him who was of such promise that in the judgment of everyone he would have surpassed in virtue and valour every other of the house of 'Uthman. . . .

". . . Immediately the Capigliar had performed his office he issued from the tent of the sovereign weeping, which was observed by many who guessed what had happened. Forthwith the Sultan sent to take off the royal seal from the hand of Rustam Pasha, grand vizir, and had it delivered to Muhammad Pasha, who had occupied the second place in rank, causing him to take the first seat. At the same time he sent another man to tell his master of the horse to take his dead son's horse to his own stable, where are the other horses of the Sultan. When the master of the horse took it by the reins from the hands of the dead man's *mirakhur-bashi*, and led it through the midst of the camp to the imperial stables, and as the soldiers saw the horse of the unhappy dead prince being led away, there arose a great outcry in the camp, so that all men ran out of their tents at the same time to see that action which was a sign of what had happened to the horse's master.

¹ i.e. Kapuyular Kadhudasi an equivalent of "First Chamberlain" of the Sultan; in modern Turkish spelling, "Kapıcılar Kehyasi", literally 'chief of the doorkeepers'.

² Talismans, which in Persia in modern times often consist of verses of the Quran worn in an armlet or silver locket bound round the upper arm, under the clothing.

"So, in order that the Janissaries should not make some disturbance, thinking that Mustafa might be still alive, he caused straightway the body of his dead son to be placed on a carpet outside the tents in a place where every one of them might see it.

"Afterwards two *capigis*¹ led the *mirakhur-bashi* of the dead man, and his standard-bearer in front of the pavilions of the Sultan, and there their heads were cut off. They were the dearest and most attached servants that Sultan Mustafa had had. The standard-bearer was a Venetian gentleman of the family of Michel, who being a noble apprentice in a galley was taken prisoner together with the galley by the Turkish fleet at the time the Turks had last made war against the Signory of Venice, which was in 1538, and he was the chief over all the other slaves of Mustafa. By order of the king the obsequies of the dead man were performed by the whole camp, and afterwards the corpse of the deceased was placed on one of the sovereign's carriages, and the other two bodies on two others: and they were carried to Brusa for burial. All ranks of the army were in exceeding great grief over this death, and more than all others the Janissaries were loud in their laments, speaking out loudly against the Sultan and blaming him for having done this wrongfully: and they said so in such loud voices and so near to the tents of the sovereign that he himself could hear; and because it was the common opinion of all that Rustam Pasha had been the author and adviser of this murder, his life was on the point of being lost, for the Janissaries wanted to slay him.

"After having done all this the Sultan commanded the army to leave Erekli, and to set out for Caesarea the Great (Kaisarieh), distant from Erekli two days' journey. Having reached this place he sent to call the ambassador of the Sufi to an audience, and had him informed by the Pashas of the terms which he (the Sultan) wanted to make peace with the Persian king, their tenour being that the Sufi should cede to him the province of Shirwan, and should get rid of those who in his kingdom continually cursed and swore against the name of Abu Bakr, one of the four doctors of his (the Sultan's) sect, whom the Sufis hold to be heretics. He (the Sultan) required that the Persian" (i.e. Shah) "in his mosques should read and preach the doctrines of Abu Bakr, and cause it to be observed in his country, promising that, if the Sufi would agree to these conditions which were most just, he (the Sultan) would thereafter observe such, and so perfect a courtesy, as had never been heard that any Sultan had practised towards anyone, but that, should he (the Sufi) not agree, he (the Sultan) promised to make war on him till he had deprived him of his whole kingdom.

"When the ambassador had learned these terms, he said that he had not authority to conclude peace on such conditions, but would return to his master and would make him a report of what he had heard from the Pashas in the name of their lord, and on it would be taken a decision as to peace or war. With this he was given leave to depart, and a valuable present, and it was signified to him that he should return with the decision to Aleppo, in which place the Turkish Sultan willed to pass the winter. Some days later the latter caused the army to march thence, he himself with his 'Porte' and a considerable number of other soldiery taking the road to Aleppo, while the rest of the men he placed in various positions to pass the winter. He sent the Baiglarbaigi of Anatolia forward to Erzerum with 60,000 horse and some 2,000 Janissaries, and he caused the Baiglarbaigi of Greece and his men to winter in the vicinity of Caesarea, with them there being a similar number of mounted soldiers. With the person of the Sultan there was the Aga of the Janissaries together with all the other men of the 'Porte', who always followed his person. Sultan Selim remained always at two days' distance from the person of his lord and father, who several times before reaching Aleppo sent for him to come to his presence. But Selim never would come, except after he was in Aleppo, as will be said in due place: and many judged that he (Selim) was unwilling to come, doubting lest that should happen to him which had happened to Sultan Mustafa.

"With the Sultan there was always Sultan Jahangir, his fifth son, who was hunchbacked

¹ Literally "doorkeepers".

"and much beloved by his father, who after the death of Sultan Mustafa wanted to give him (Jahangir) the sanjakate of Amasia, where he (Mustafa) had lived, but Jehangir declined it, saying that he did not want to be separated from the person of his lord and father, until he died at his feet (as occurred afterwards). But he was refusing to quit his father merely because of the hope he had of succeeding to his father's dominions: and, in the event of the death of his father, had he happened to be in his father's company, he could have easily succeeded, because, were the death of the sovereign to have occurred in Constantinople with this hunchback present, he might well have mounted the throne before the other brothers would have learnt the news of such decease: and, if he had in that event been in camp with the army, he might easily have been chosen by the soldiers, who would then have placed him in possession of the empire. This might well have befallen him because he was much more beloved by the soldiers and Janissaries than his older brothers, and this because he was of an easy and pleasing character, and in a nice way sought to be pleasant with everyone.

"Selim, who is now the eldest-born and who expects the empire for himself, is of a harsh and terrible nature, without any good qualities to cause him to be liked. Sultan Bayazid, too, is of a saturnine and melancholy nature, and sets out to be a man devoted to study, and because he has up till now little sought after the liking of the soldiers, for that reason he is held in small account by them. Fate did not permit that Sultan Jahangir should come to the test of winning the kingdom because he died, as we shall tell in its place. It was said that he grieved beyond measure over his brother Mustafa, and that, when he had the news, he was like to commit suicide—which is most difficult to believe. . . .

". . . Aleppo at that period was fortified by towers furnished with artillery. In the castle there was an Agha with 200 Janissaries, performing the duty of castellan; in addition, the number of other persons living in this castle may come to a total of 2,000. The number of persons in the city together with those of the suburbs is large, and I shall not attempt to specify it otherwise than by saying that in the year 1555 there died of plague in three months in the town and suburbs more than 120,000 persons. Nor for that, after the cessation of the disease, was there to be seen any great sign of such a loss of population: and let not anyone think that I dare to assert that such a number died of my own opinion, as I was present there, nor in the opinion and estimate of other men who thought so; but it is stated on exact knowledge, because of all the corpses which were then carried out to burial every day the Qazi and the Baiglarbaigi wanted to have a list, and for this purpose they placed men at the gates of the city and the suburbs, who daily brought them a detailed list, which I have seen: and because of that I say that it is the truth, which can be judged from that evidence, that the number of the inhabitants of this city is very great. . . .

"The Grand Signor, the Turk, reached this city of Aleppo . . . on the 4th November, and on the 5th made his entry into it."

(A lengthy description follows of the order of the procession, and march through the city by the various contingents.)

"On the 19th November the most distinguished Mario Aloisi Malipiero, who at that time resided in Aleppo as Consul for our Venetian people, went to make his bow, and kiss the hands of Sultan Sulaiman . . ." (this reception is also described at some length). "On the 29th of the same month Sultan Jahangir died: his illness was pneumonia, which finished him in four days, and because his illness was unknown outside the saraglio, when the news of his death came out, it was supposed that the Sultan himself had died: and this rumour spread in such wise that it was believed in many parts of the city, for which reason in some places a beginning had been made of plundering the Jews and bazars, which are places where are the booths and shops of the traders. Everything was upside down and the matter was like to go from bad to worse, if Ibrahim Pasha had not acted with rapidity. He left his dwelling on horseback at a gallop and went to tell the Grand Signor the importance of the matter, urging that he (the Sultan) should come out to show

"himself to the Janissaries, who were already rioting. The Sultan came forth straightway, "as he was, and stood at the gate of the house with a stick in his hand, on which he leaned. "When the Janissaries saw him they grew quiet, and so the riot, which was being made by "many people who had run to the king's house to learn the correctness of the facts, did "not proceed further. . . .

" . . . In those days the Sultan decided to go to Jerusalem, and the day for the departure "had been fixed, when the day previous there arrived Vlachs sent by the Baiglarbaigi of "Van, who in his letters related how the son of the Persian king with 8,000 cavalry had "made a sudden assault on Van and captured many men and massacred many of those "whom he had found outside the town, and afterwards having plundered the neighbouring "villages and done serious damage, feigning to turn back, had taken up a position in a place "suitable for attacking those who had left the town. . . ."

Two Persian spies taken were brought by the Vlachs into Aleppo for interrogation regarding the plans of the Persians.

"To show his contempt for them the Pasha had removed the red caps, which they wore on "their heads, and which stand out half an arm's length beyond the head and is of red cloth "quilted in rolls lengthwise, and of a thickness that it can be grasped with one hand. From "this headdress they get the name of 'Qizil-bash', which in their tongue means 'red-head'. "Afterwards he had them led before the Sultan, who was in a garden outside the town, "and the latter caused them to come before him and questioned them, and afterwards "ordered that they should be taken out into the fields and there decapitated. . . . With "this news disappeared the hope that all had that the ambassador from the Persian monarch "would return with terms of peace: on the contrary it was understood from those prisoners "that on the arrival of the ambassador there with the news of the death of Sultan Mustafa "their sovereign and all his people had feasted and had orgies for eight days long and that "they mocked at the demands which the Sultan made of them for concluding peace, saying "that they would never make peace unless the Turks had first surrendered to them Van, "Erzerum and Baghdad. They (the prisoners) also had said that preparations for war in "the new year were being made with all assiduity. On account of this news it was decided "that the Sultan should put off his journey to Jerusalem, and with him Sultan Selim and "all the men got ready for it. Two days later there was such a heavy fall of snow that the "country was covered with it, and for this reason the journey to Jerusalem was put off, "or so it was feigned: instead, for about twenty days they went hunting, and after the end "of the hunt the Sultan returned to the town and both Pashas and the troops began "preparations for the expedition. And so the soldiers, who till then had considered it "certain that peace would be made and that the Sultan would not trouble to go to war, "had the less hope of returning home . . . though there was not one of them in such a "vast concourse who did not go unwillingly.

"By orders of the Sultan it was publicly announced that he would set off on the campaign "on the 9th April . . . and that when they had set off for Bir on the 20th of the month "they were to make a bridge over the river Euphrates in order to pass across the army "to the other bank. . . ."

After description of an attack, made early after the New Year (then reckoned in March) 1553 by the Baiglarbaigi of Baghdad on a fortress in Kurdistan, and how he was tricked into hasty flight, leaving his camp standing, by false news that the son of the Shah was about to attack him, and how in the flight his force was ambushed by the Kurds in a pass and badly handled, so that the Pasha fell ill of vexation, and died at midsummer, and how in March too, in obedience to a summons, there came to Aleppo the Pasha of Cairo, apprehensive lest through the enmity of the Grand Vizir the fate of Sultan Mustafa should be awaiting him also, and how therefore he was relieved to find himself graciously received by Sultan Sulaiman; the

narrative goes on to relate that this Pasha took his place with the other two—of Anatolia and Greece—and

“The Sultan proceeded to discuss with them the business of the war, and they determined that the enemy’s country should be attacked from three sides, in such wise that the Baiglarbaigi of Anatolia should invade the province of Shirwan, the Baiglarbaigi of Greece that region which lies between Shirwan and Tabriz, while the Grand Signor would advance on Tabriz from the direction of Van. . . .

“ . . . When that had been settled, it was further decided that on the 9th April the Sultan in person should set off on the campaign, just as had been previously intimated to the troops. They determined, too, that 2,000 Janissaries should be sent to the Baiglarbaigi of Greece, so that he should have some of them, as the Baiglarbaigi of Anatolia also had. . . .

“ . . . On the appointed day the Sultan in person set out in the ceremonious fashion customary with him when he goes to the front. On his leaving his palace the Janissaries gave him a salute with their muskets, and the castle also with eighty cannon, and they unfurled seven standards, which are borne behind his person by seven mounted men, one of these being all white in the midst of the others—on the right three, one green, one red, one red and green. . . . By the 20th (April) all the troops were out of the town when the Sultan marched off for Bir, a place three days’ distance from Aleppo, where a bridge for the troops to cross was made without difficulty, for they had feared that it might be carried away because of the great flood which had suddenly risen by reason of the snow melting. . . .

“Before the Sultan left his pavilion he ordered Ibrahim Pasha to go to Constantinople with the greatest speed possible, giving him orders as to what he wanted done, and this Pasha set out on the day following the departure of the Grand Signor.

“Four days later there arrived in Aleppo Monsieur de Codogne¹ [*? sic*] ambassador of the king of France, who having rested three days then set out to go and find Sulaiman . . . and came up with him on this side of Karkamish¹ and on the road went forward to kiss his hand. The ambassador was received by him with great courtesy, and, after he had learnt the request of the king (of France) who asked for the” (Turkish) “fleet, on account of his quarrel with the Emperor over the business of Naples, and for other business relating to India and Corsica, he (Sultan Sulaiman) granted all that he had asked, and at once men were posted off to Constantinople on this account, with orders to the captain of the fleet . . . regarding what he had to do.”

There follows in the narrative a lengthy description of the Turkish forces being drawn up in battle array for inspection, and their tents, and of their marching past.

“Having marched the first day and pitched his first camp, the Sultan gave orders that the army should not march the next day and, having had got ready for that day a very large pavilion, he caused to be assembled the Pashas and their chief officers of cavalry and of the Janissaries, and then, having gone up to take his seat on a chair placed in that pavilion in a raised position so that he could be seen by everyone he began to speak, saying:

“ ‘Now, as you can see, we have arrived at a place whence but a short distance remains for us to march, and as soon we shall be entering the country of the perfidious Tahmasp, God’s enemy and ours. It is not ambition that I should rule over his country which has moved me to make war on him, nor yet greed for glory, which many consider to be the supreme reward of toil.’ ”

Sulaiman went on:

“ ‘Already I am so old and so troubled with infirmities that my spirit desires rest

¹ These names are so misspelt in the manuscript copy as to be doubtfully identifiable.

“and peace and quiet more than acquiring new dominions with all the fatigues and
“labour and warfare involved. . . .”

and he added that a corner of Armenia, full of forests, barren and mountainous, and unpopulated in parts of it, was of small value. But said he:

“It is not permissible for me to remain at peace, and allow this most cruel Tahmasp, ever more perfidious in his perfidy, to go on constantly affronting Allah, nor is it honourable for me to allow him to go daily like a robber raiding the borderlands of my empire, causing such great losses by carrying off property, burning houses, and slaying our subjects. It is not fitting that I, who am your sovereign . . . should endure that there remain in power any longer he who in the past has used every sort of cruelty in shedding the blood of our brethren and who seeks all he can to drive us away from what is ours. . . . From my exchequer I have brought here with me for your service, as you can see for yourselves, 700 loads of gold, which are all to be spent to be of service to you!”

“When the monarch had finished his speech which caused everyone to marvel greatly, because these Turkish rulers are not accustomed to make any speech in public, Ahmad and Ali Pashas, and then the others, one by one offered to shed their blood and give their lives readily in this enterprise and any other. . . . Then the army set out in the direction of Van . . . but afterwards . . . they marched for Erzerum, which is far out of the line of march they had been following, because from west to east they turned south to north. The reason why they did this was that they learnt that the Persian king had heard of the march of the army, with which was the Grand Signor in person, on Tabriz by way of Van, and had dispatched his son Isma’il, who is a well appointed and valiant young man, with 20,000 horse into some mountains which were across the road which the Sultan and the Baiglarbaigi of Greece were to take. Holding the centre of these mountains in their power, and knowing the passes thoroughly well, they were conveniently placed for moving down on both the (Turkish) forces, and so with few of their own men and at small trouble they would be easily able to prevent the one force from giving assistance to the other. . . . So, apprehending that the Persian king might execute his scheme against them, the Turks changed their plan and determined to unite (the two forces) and proceed together against the enemy. . . . Therefore it was that they left the road to Van and took that for Erzerum, where by order of the Sultan the two divisions arrived together before he did. . . . Further, he (Sultan Sulaiman) wanted to make provision for nothing preventing victuals and supplies sent from Cappadocia from reaching the camp: and, as each time the army went farther away from Erzerum advancing into the Sufi’s country, the supply trains might easily be interfered with by the Georgians and Kurds—which would have involved a grave risk of the army being lost, or it being made to retreat suddenly—it seemed to him that it would be a suitable provision to leave a guard in that region. . . . At this juncture Ibrahim Pasha, whom the Sultan had sent to Constantinople, arrived at Brusa, which was formerly called Bithynia and had the boy of the dead Sultan Mustafa, who was there with his father’s mother, taken and strangled, and afterwards buried near the tomb of his father. . . . The reason why the Sultan had ordered the execution of the boy of Sultan Mustafa is unknown, unless it be because in the army the Janissaries and soldiers, who had been devoted to Sultan Mustafa, were saying that, even if he were dead, his son remained alive and would be their sovereign, despite anyone who might not wish it: such gossip and such words had been circulating without any restraint, and it was being discussed publicly everywhere. . . .

“Having received the submission of many Kurdish chiefs and trusting similarly to have that of the Georgians, in order not to lose time waiting to receive it the Sultan set out with the army in the direction of the Persian king, who having left Nakhchiwan had

"taken up a position in the plains of Chaldaea . . . and learnt of the arrival of the whole "army together, had made a five days' march towards the Turkish army. He had with "him 8,000 horse in three divisions, at the head of one of which was his son, himself commanding the second, and a brave general of his the third. The Turks made several "days' march through the enemy's country, which was absolutely deserted, and then "came to a scarcity of corn and fodder: one horse's feed was costing 20 aspri (which is as "much as one-third of a gold ducat) while one small loaf of barley bread was being sold "for 4 marks, and the men were already complaining, apprehensive lest the price would "become dearer from day to day. In part those who should have sent supplies from Cappadocia were the cause of the rise in prices, because they were not sufficiently diligent; and "for that reason the Grand Signor had them beheaded.

"The man, who had gone to obtain the submission of the Georgians in the name of the "Grand Signor, as related above, obtained as much as he sought, but, having on his return "journey reached a wood in that country he was attacked by forty unknown men who killed "him, but did not harm those accompanying him, from whom they merely took the letters "which the Georgian prince had written to the Sultan. When the latter heard this news "he began to suspect, as was the case, that the Georgians were intending to cause some "trouble to the supplies coming from Cappadocia: and so he sent another Baiglarbaigi "with several officers and a good number of cavalry into the country of the Georgians, "charging them to do no harm, but only to take up their quarters in that district, so that "from fear of these men the Georgians should refrain from causing damage to the country. " . . . He (Sultan Sulaiman) himself marched on with the army, keeping the Persian king "on his front, and trusting soon to bring him to the action in which he had placed all his "hopes of bringing the war to a speedy termination. This did not come about because the "Sufi, who very well realizing the disadvantage he would have in a battle on account of "his being without artillery wanted by all means to avoid an action; but, seeing the numbers "of the enemy's forces to be so very large, he deemed there would be no better way of "fighting them than by keeping them to the locality where they (the Turks) had come by "a shortage of provisions, so that, lacking these, they should be compelled either to retreat "or to perish of starvation: and to keep them constantly harassed by exertions and being "caused to stand continually on the *qui vive*, and by being made to march by difficult and "tiring roads, where they would find no facilities, and that it would come to pass, as actually "happened, i.e. that sicknesses of various kinds would appear among the troops and wear "them out. . . ."

The writer went on to relate how, in consequence, in their abortive attempt to bring the Persians to a battle the Turks daily arrived at a place where the Persians had camped a few days previously.

"When the Turks saw that each day they drew closer to the Persian army, they considered it certain that they would overtake it in two days and bring it to a battle; but "this never happened, for during more than twenty successive days the one army camped for "the night in the encampments which the other (the Persian) had quitted that morning. "Each day the Turks pushed on the faster, making longer marches, but they never were able "to do enough to come up with one from the Persian camp. Of the Turks themselves, "as many as went in advance of the others, 500 and 200 horse strong, in order to make an "attack on the enemy, or get a sight of them, all were hardly handled, many being killed "and many made prisoners. The one army never came in sight of the other; and many "times there was but half a day's march between them. As a result of the arduousness "of the marching, and the hardships, and the very great heat, and also of the bad water "they were drinking, the men of the Turkish army contracted serious sickness, especially "dysentery, from which many died.

"When the Sultan saw these maladies spread, because the number of the many dead and

"sick increased daily, and that he was unable to reach the Persian camp, he determined to "cease the pursuit, and ordered that the army should march on Nakhchiwan; but, arrived "there, they found that it was completely evacuated, not a single man there. All had left "and taken with them everything, nor had there remained anything save empty houses, "and those largely in ruins. . . The troops were diminishing in numbers daily, and as "the Sultan saw that there was a great scarcity of victuals and everything . . . and that "the winter was already approaching, he decided to turn back to his country; but, before "leaving, news was brought to him that Isma'il, son of the Sufi, with a large number of "Georgians had fallen on 3,000 camels laden with provisions sent from Cappadocia for "the (Turkish) camp, and badly handled all, cutting to pieces their guards. This was "very bitter news to the Turks, who would have been no little recuperated by these supplies "from the starvation they had suffered for no small length of days. At this news the Sultan "was seized with such a fit of rage that he was on the point of turning back the troops "straightway to the country of the Georgians, who, he well realized, had been responsible "for all these losses inflicted, because for the most part the cavalry with Isma'il were "Georgians. Nothing stopped him from doing this but the rapid approach of winter, "which in those regions is excessively rigorous. . . So he judged it the better plan to "return to winter in Cappadocia, intending in the new year to revenge himself on the "Georgians."

The narrative then tells at length how a remarkable old Persian came into the Turkish camp and harangued the Sultan, exhorting him as a Muslim not to do ill to other Muslims, for that was contrary to their law, in such eloquent fashion in the Persian language, which Sultan Sulaiman knew well, that he was moved to tears.

"At the end of his harangue he adjured Sulaiman to make peace with Tahmasp king "of Persia, in such a fine way that Sulaiman was brought to wish to do so. The old man "admitted that before coming to his Majesty he had been to Tahmasp, and fulfilled a like "mission and had found the Persian monarch very disposed to make peace, provided always "that Persian dignity would not be wounded. In order to keep up the reputation (*izzat*) "of the Turks Sulaiman wanted some conditions by which Persian dignity would not have "been preserved. Finally . . . it was proposed that peace should be made on the terms "that each of these monarchs should retain what he had at the beginning of the campaign, "on condition that all subjects and tributaries of the one should be respected by the other: "and so Sulaiman gave his word, and was made to promise by the old Persian man particularly that, neither then nor after peace was made, would he do any harm to the "Georgians.

"When this decision had been taken the old Persian promised Sulaiman that within a "month he would arrange that Tahmasp would send an ambassador with authority to "conclude peace. With that the old man took leave of Sulaiman, to whom he gave that "book, which he held in his hand while speaking to him, the value of which is said to be "6,000 gold ducats, in return for which Sulaiman gave him double the value. As soon as "the old Persian had left for Tabriz, Sulaiman moved his army, sending it to Amasia in "Cappadocia, where he had given orders for the ambassador from the Persian king to "come: and when he reached Erzerum he sent to inform the provinces of his own return "and that peace with the Persians was about to be made, and for that reason for eight days "there was festival in Aleppo day and night. When Sulaiman arrived in Amasia he "missed the greater part of the Janissaries so that they should return to their houses in "Constantinople. . . ."

The Persian ambassador did not arrive in Amasia before March 1555. The Sultan wished to get him to Constantinople in order to dazzle him with its splendour, but the Persian replied that it would be contrary to the instructions given him.

"This ambassador had appeared with eight other men on horseback very sumptuously clothed. As a gift they brought the Turkish Sultan a very fine camp tent, superbly worked in gold and silk, with the pole that held it up worked in gold studded with jewels, and together with it a store of carpets and cushions of gold ornamented with jewels that these Turks employ to furnish their rooms.

"That same morning that he entered the town he went to pay his respects to Sulaiman and kiss his hand, and afterwards he was conducted by the Pashas to a lodging prepared for him, outside which neither he nor the others went once until their departure. Two days later peace was concluded with the terms as stated above, i.e. that each remained in possession of what he held, and the subjects and tributaries and confederates of each party were included in the peace. Two days later the ambassador left, very richly clothed, with all his men; another two days had not passed before Sulaiman set out for Constantinople, but so slowly that he arrived there on their festival, which was celebrated at the beginning of the moon of the month of August.

"And this is the end of the vast warlike expedition that Sulaiman made in the year of our salvation 1554, to free himself either from the claims that his subjects made on him because of the losses inflicted on them by the Persians, or else to free himself from the suspicion conceived by such as might have it that it was a less difficult matter to deprive him of his empire than any other: and, as far as can be reasoned with sound judgment, *this affair has been a work allowed by our Lord God for the rescue of Christianity from final ruin, which was menacing it in the near future: and perhaps, too, in order to discourage those Turks so terrible to our men whom for so many years past up till now they have always defeated in battle and put to flight through fear, in such wise that the name of Turk has become so formidable that at the sound of it all the West is appalled.* . . .

". . . It remains, however, for the West not to stay hesitating and thinking of its local affairs, but to take thought for its future, because the temper of Sulaiman is such that now through the discord between two of the greatest princes of Christendom he sees the opportunity suitable for carrying out his plans, he is not one to fail himself in his aim, the more so as he is now freed of the suspicion that his own people had about him, and from warfare with races of his own religion. . . ."

The portrait of Sulaiman in the preceding narrative is far from flattering as to his military leadership: and not for the man who watches while his son is murdered in his presence, and who suppresses a grandchild is the epithet "magnificent" allowable in modern estimates. But the reader will have derived from what otherwise may seem unrelated with the Persia, to which the first Carmelites came, some impression of the menace to the peace of Europe constituted by such a relentless war-machine as this Sultan typified, and also of the deep-seated hostility between the two bordering countries already existing by 1550 apart from European profit by it.

Some twenty years passed, and then war flared up again between the two Muslim states: and there are three reports by Venetian envoys—early war correspondents and official observers from the Republic—which give much insight into conditions prevailing on the Persian side of the frontier. Shah Tahmasp I was even less attractive in his qualities than Sulaiman, Sultan of the Turks. Together with *The narrative by Vincenzo degl' Alessandri to his Highness the Doge and Signory of Venice of the things observed by him in the kingdom of Persia, 1574*,¹ which was written while Shah Tahmasp I was still alive (indicated by the letter A) there is hereunder combined (with a different marginal spacing and under the letter B) and appended an account, author's name not given, in Arch. Secr. Vat., Misc. Arm. II, vol. 74, p. 271, for it provides the sequel to the story during the reign of Isma'il II and the opening of that of Muhammad Khudabandeh, being written in 1578–9. The Perso-Turkish war of 1578–2 is the subject of yet another lengthy report (indicated by the letter C), *Description of the War between the Turk and the Persian*, also without the writer's name being

¹ See in Arch. Secr. Vat., Polit Var. Misc. Arm. 74, p. 1; also Fondo Chigi, No. II, 48, p. 301.

mentioned, copied in Misc. Arm. II, vol. 74, p. 241: and from it a few extracts may too be given:

A

"Since in accordance with the command given me recently by your Highness I, Vincenzo 'degl'Alessandri, have to put in writing all that I have carefully observed, besides what I 'have written in my letters in the course of the 21 months from the day when I left your 'feet to go into Persia, your Lordships must not expect from me, so little proficient in such 'craft, either that style of writing, or that orderliness which perchance the business re-'quired, in what I have to relate, but should be satisfied with the best I can do. . . .
 ". . . To begin with the person of the king. You should know that he is named Tah-'masp, of the lineage of the Sayyids,¹ a family with a nobility 980 years old, descending 'in direct line from 'Ali, son-in-law of Muhammad, their prophet. . . ."

B

" . . . The first (of the Safawi line) was Shaikh Saif, who following the cult of 'Ali 'was persecuted by the Turks, who observe the creed of 'Umar, Abu Bakr, 'Uthman. 'He fled to these regions, to the town of Ardabil, where living an exemplary life and 'considered a saint by all the people round, he came to be held in such reverence by 'everyone that he brought many of the inhabitants there over to the sect of 'Ali, and 'to obeying him, as he was deemed to be their head.

"(After his death) there succeeded Shaikh Junaid² [*sic*], who either through evil 'habits, or because he was not constant in that creed of theirs, was poisoned by those 'people: and there succeeded him Shaikh Haidar, who did not live long, because he 'was killed in a war, leaving Shaikh Isma'il as his heir. . . ."

A

"(Tahmasp) was the son of Isma'il the first, whose father was named Shaikh Haidar, 'a man of small wealth in worldly goods, but of great goodness and religious learning, 'and considered by them a saint: and it was said that many years previously he had pre-'dicted that his son would become a king, although Isma'il, after having promised fealty 'to the son of the daughter of the king Uzun Hasan, with small fear of Allah made himself 'master of the kingdom, causing the head of the said son (or grandson of Uzun Hasan) 'to be cut off. If in that fortune favoured and prospered him, he had in the course of his 'reign, however, much travail from the Ottoman emperors, he having been the first who 'began to tame the greatness of that empire and to be allowed to set foot in the principal 'fortresses there were of Sultan Sulaiman. He made himself master of Karkamish,³ a 'town of the greatest importance abounding in all necessities, very populous, full of many 'craftsmen and situated in a magnificent site, so that while naturally strong now by the 'industry of the Ottomans it has been made far stronger: in this town there is stationed a 'Pasha of high rank, as there depend on that place many lands and forts, which, as I have 'said, were all taken by this Isma'il, such as Mardin, Urfa, Ersinjan, and Tokat, together 'with a great number of hamlets and villages depending on those towns and forts. . . ."

B

"This" (Isma'il) "was the first who after the aforementioned had the title of king in Persia, 'of which he made himself almost entirely master, subjugating many provinces and 'districts which had been under Turkish rule. He fought Sultan Selim in the plains 'of Kaldaran, and was beaten by the (Turkish) artillery. He was most liberal, and 'particularly on his soldiers he would spend all he had, of which at his death evidence 'was provided by his being found in possession of very little gold. He was warlike, 'and delighted above measure in hunting, as is testified by a mosque in the city of

¹ Sayyid, not Shaikh, as the copyist seems to have read.

² and ³ Readings doubtful owing to corrupt spelling in manuscript copy.

"Isfahan built with the horns of wild animals. This valiant king was poisoned for reasons which cannot be ascertained, having for 15 years ruled the kingdom with very good fortune. His son, named Tahmasp, but afterwards called 'Shah' Tahmasp¹ because 'Shah' means 'king', father of the present king, succeeded to the kingdom at the age of 10,² and reigned over it 50 years. He warred with Sulaiman, notwithstanding that he would never come to a pitched battle, as a result of the experience which his father had of the (effect of) artillery. He lost Tabriz, a chief city of that empire, and won it back again. He made peace with the Turk, and promised never to break out in war against him (as, indeed, he acted accordingly), and in the terms among other things it was decided, and moreover put into effect, that the fortress of Kars should be razed to the ground, and that for 8 miles on either side the land should be devastated, so that there could never arise quarrels between the bordering people. Neither of them would ever take up arms against the other, but, rather, in time of need they promised to succour one another.

"After the peace Shah Tahmasp, desirous of repairing the harm done (by it?) and his lost reputation by some distinguished enterprise, made war on a Georgian prince, hostile both to him and to the Turks, and vanquished him easily, having found him unprepared from having rather thought of anything else being likely to happen than the king of Persia should go to war with him in the winter season when all around was snow. And, in addition to the sacking, and to the booty which he captured, he carried off 30,000 souls, men and women between the ages of 15 and 30 years.³ Of this Georgian king there were 14 children, all scattered in various towns of the kingdom, and, when they learnt of the loss of their father, and of the royal capital, each of them made himself king of the town in which he was, and so the kingdom remained divided into 14 parts. One of these brothers is Simon,⁴ and that one who last year was in the power of the king of Persia and promised the latter to overrun the countryside, and to let nothing go to the army of the enemy; and, so that he might be believed, he embraced Muhammadanism, as I wrote to Your Highness. He is a man very greatly esteemed, so greatly that some people hold that it is sufficient to put the enemy in the greatest predicament, if he be on the side of the king. These Georgians are excellent soldiers, and on account of their being very expert at it, they care for nothing else save cavalry work. . . . Their chief centre is now at Tiflis, which pays tribute to the kingdom of Persia. After the expedition mentioned above Shah Tahmasp turned to the kingdom of Gilan, which he captured together with its king, called Khan Ahmad [*? sic*] who was sent by him a captive to the fortress of Fars."

A

" . . . Besides this present king" (i.e. Tahmasp I) "who was the first-born, Isma'il had three other sons, i.e. Ilyas⁵ Mirza, Sām Mirza and Bahram Mirza. Ilyas was a man of great valour and great energy, and, during the time when he was on good terms with the king his brother, captured — king of Shirwan and his towns and lands. That country is very extensive and important, and it is on the shores of the Caspian Sea. It fell entirely into the hands of the king, his brother" (i.e. Shah Tahmasp) "and the latter having made no show of gratitude towards him" (Ilyas Mirza) "for the acquisition of so many lands, this led to him (Ilyas Mirza) becoming his enemy and joining the Ottomans, and causing Sultan Sulaiman with a very large force to attack his brother and take from him many

¹ Here spelt "Satamas."

² Krusinski's memoirs say: 18 years—wrongly, for with this account B agrees E. G. Browne's *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Cambridge University Library*, 1906, which says: 10 years, 6 months, 28 days, on the day following Ismail I's death, 23.5.1524.

³ Shah 'Abbas I in forcibly transplanting some fifty years later the Armenians was not then the first to use these cruel measures against the Christian races of the trans-Caucasus.

⁴ Was this the same "Simeon," "King of Karthveli and Iberia," who sent a messenger with a letter to Pope Clement VIII in 1598, see the footnote to p. 63. Here the reference is to 1578.

⁵ More likely than the spelling Ilkhas of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed.

"districts, particularly the town of Van, then a principal fortress of Persia six days' journey distant from Tabriz. For that reason the said king (Tahmasp) had him slain, as also "Sām Mirza his second brother, suspecting that he too might revolt, while the third brother "had previously died a natural death of whom there remains a son who has his governorship "in India¹ and to whom the king desired to give in marriage one of his daughters and "summoned to that end, but the people" (of that province?) "would never agree to his "going to Qazwin, doubting whether the king might not do him some harm."

"The children of this king (Tahmasp I) are eleven males and three females, born of "various wives. The eldest is named Khudabandeh Mirza, aged about 43² years—a "man of a quiet nature, who cares not much about worldly affairs, contenting himself "with a small government given him by his father in the province of Khurasan, which is "called 'Cheri' [*sic* perhaps Harat], and he has three sons, the eldest at the Court and "aged 14 years,³ of most handsome looks, and high spirits, dearly loved by the king both "for his qualities as also for the reason that, except for these, he (the king) has no other "grandsons by his sons. Isma'il, the second son (i.e. of Shah Tahmasp I) is aged 41⁴ and is "naturally robust and of very great courage, and a valiant heart, and eager for fighting, "having on many occasions displayed his valour against the Ottomans, in particular against "the Pasha of Erzerum, whose very numerous force he routed with a small number of "cavalry. If the Pasha had not retired, he (Isma'il) could have made himself master of "the town. For that reason Maqsum Baig, the chief councillor of the king and a great "enemy of Isma'il, took the opportunity to tell the king that he knew there were too lofty "ideas in the mind of that young man, since without his father's permission he had collected "an army and invaded the country of the Ottomans in time of peace. This seemed to "him (Maqsum Baig) signs of scant obedience; and he showed the king some letters "sent to the captains in the provinces calling on them to rise and fight against the Turks. "Therefore, by the persuasion of Maqsum Baig, the king determined to put him (Isma'il) "in a fortress under the guard of captains and many soldiers. So for 17 years past⁵ he has "been kept in captivity, and, although this year the guards have been taken off him, still "he has not been set free. Many times, to please him, the king has sent him beautiful "women to keep, but he has never consented" (i.e. to have anything to do with them) "saying that he himself was patiently bearing to be the prisoner of his father, but that it "would have been too great a strain on him to see sons of his prisoners too, and also that "women were not suitable for a captive.

"Isma'il is beyond measure beloved by his father, but there is a great fear because, "though the whole people most ardently desire to have him as their lord, the nobles⁶ show "that they are much afraid of him on account of his cruel nature. For that reason it is "considered that, when he succeeds to the throne, a large part of the chief officers in the "army will be dismissed by him, and a number of his brothers, who have had charge of "a considerable portion of the kingdom, will be put out of the way.

"Sultan Haidar Mirza, the third son and lieutenant of his father, is aged 18 years,⁷ "small in frame but of very handsome features, and most graceful both in speaking and "in his dress, and a consummate horseman. He is exceedingly beloved by his father, "and delights in listening to stories of war, although on account of his very delicate and "almost feminine frame and build, he does not show himself very suited for such occupation. "He makes attempts to kill animals with his own hands, and often is unable to thrust them "through the skins, even when the swords are excellently tempered. I have myself seen "him make such like attempts, and afterwards remain full of confusion and blush, making

¹ Perhaps Kandahar.

² Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh was thus born in or about 1531.

³ Presumably Hamzeh Mirza, eldest brother of the future Shah 'Abbas I, and thus born about 1560.

⁴ Shah Isma'il II therefore born in or about 1533.

⁵ And his imprisonment began in 1557 and may, therefore, coming so soon after the peace signed with Sultan Sulaiman 1554 (as related above), have been a measure to prevent his bellicosity from bringing on a fresh war with Turkey.

⁶ *Sic*, for "Sultani" in original Italian.

⁷ From the context 18 years reads admissibly, though the gap from the ages of the two elder brothers is strange.

"excuses sometimes that the swords would not cut, at others that out of pity he did not want to kill the animals. His intellect is good, and for that age he is very serious, and shows that he understands matters of government, and knows how the other princes in the world rule.

"Sultan Mustafa Mirza, and Mir Jan Mirza, and —¹ Mirza are all three 14 to 15 years old, of good dispositions, and exhibit plenty of ability. The others likewise, of 8, 10 to 11 years, are in Khurasan studying, except for a small boy of 5 who is with the king, because for that age he is alert and pleasing. The daughters are all married to relatives, to whom as dowries large governorships have been given.

"The king is 64 years old, in the 51st year of his reign, having been chosen king at the age of 13 years.² He is of medium height, well-formed bodily, in face rather dark, with large lips and a beard at present long and not very grey. In temperament he is rather melancholy, which can be known in other ways by many signs, but chiefly from his not having left his palace once in the course of ten years,³ either to go hunting, or for any kind of pleasure. This gives much dissatisfaction to the people, who according to the custom of that country, when they do not see their king, have the greatest difficulty in letting him know of their burdens, and cannot have their petitions answered in matters of justice, for which reason day and night they are crying out at the top of their voices in front of the garden of his palace, sometimes 500, at others 1,000 together, for justice to be done them. When the king hears those cries usually he orders the people to be sent away, saying that there are judges in the country appointed for the purpose, and that the people should go and get justice from them, without reflecting that the complaints are against the tyrannical judges themselves, and against the captains and soldiers who are constantly murdering people in the roads, as in many cases I have seen, or of which I have made certain by investigation when I heard of them, as Your Highness will have gathered.

"In the town of Nakhchiwan certain assassins were arrested, who had murdered some merchants and taken their property. They were taken to the tribunal, and the judge, having become aware of the crime, had the stolen property brought to him, sending away the complainants and setting at liberty the delinquents and keeping for himself part of the goods, while the rest he dispatched to Qazwin as presents for some officers and officials. The owners of these goods went to the capital and I saw them shouting and tearing their garments daily, climbing on to the walls of the palace and calling out to the king in loud voices and asking what he intended to do, and why he did not wish such injustice to be remedied, for which often they were very severely bastinadoed, and, stones being thrown at them, they were made to jump down from the walls: nor was it ever possible for them to get a hearing. Besides this in the town of Tabriz it happened that 18 thieves armed with arquebuses by night scaled the walls of the principal bazar in that city, which is called the 'Khan of the Master',⁴ where there were 40 merchants, and, as they knew that among the others there was one, Ahmad Chalibi, a merchant of Angora, who had a considerable quantity of money in cash, they broke open the door of his chamber and murdered him, taking from him 300 tumans (which make 6,000 scudi) in addition to some ingots of silver and some crimson: and when the merchants made a movement to defend their caravansarai⁵ they were forced to retire to their rooms. A few days later, near the house where I was, a house of an Armenian was attacked at night by the same thieves with lanterns: and 4,000(?) bales of silk were taken away from him, and it was said by him that the silk in question was seen shortly afterwards in the house of the captain (governor) of Tabriz: and I well know that complaint was made at the Court of all these affairs,

¹ Unrecognizable in manuscript.

² Shah Tahmasp I. Since according to E. G. Browne's *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in Cambridge University Library*, Tahmasp I was aged 10½ years in May 1524, he was born in A.D. 1513, and was, thus, 61 years old when Vincenzo degli-Alessandri wrote A in 1574-5, according to the Christian calendar: the different age here given, 63, arises because he was quoting Muslim reckoning, 1513 being 919 A.H., and 1574-5 equalling 982-3.

³ An extraordinary trait for any man, neither invalid nor prisoner, between the ages of 51 and 61, and almost incomprehensible in that age for a king.

⁴ The manuscript has "del Signore".

⁵ "Fondaco" in manuscript.

"and the robbers found; but, still, no proceedings were taken against them in the tribunals
 "to have them punished, the king showing that he did not care a jot. Besides this, a
 "merchant and subject of the Turk, named Khwajeh Sarafintin [*? sic*], wont to come to
 "this town, being in a caravansarai in the bazar and the Qurchis, who are those that
 "guard the person of the king, having heard that he was very rich, they seized the occasion
 "to invite him to a meal, occupying his attention while their companions who had hired
 "a shop just adjoining the caravansarai in question broke through the wall and entered
 "and robbed him of 12,000 ducats in cash. The merchant in question came to his room and
 "at once became aware of the fact and went to the gate of the palace: being on friendly
 "terms with many officers, he was allowed in and lodged complaint against the Qurchis,
 "who had invited him, of complicity in this business. The king summoned the Qurchis,
 "who denied it and, when the merchant insisted that they should be put in prison and
 "their depositions taken separately, the king said that he would have done this to satisfy
 "him (the merchant), but then that, in case of the guilty parties not confessing, he would
 "have him beheaded, thinking by this that the merchant would not want further to follow
 "up the case. A few days later it happened that a young man discovered how the thieves
 "had committed the theft. The merchant had witnesses examined by the magistrate of
 "the town of Qazwin and their statements presented to the king with 400 scudi in gifts,
 "so that the matter should be promptly dealt with by his Majesty. The king sent for those
 "Qurchis, in whose possession the money was found—they had spent very little of it—and
 "he gave orders that the money in question should be placed in the Treasury, bidding that
 "Sarafintin [*? sic*] should no more be brought into his presence.

"This result gave very great occasion to all the people to reflect and talk, and lament
 "the scant justice they received, although every day similar cases were being seen to occur,
 "Shah Tahmasp caring little at hearing his subjects complaining on such grounds. One
 "day the king said to the old Qurchi, his jester, who slept in the antechamber, that his
 "Majesty had slept all the better that night for having heard him (the jester) sing. The
 "jester answered that he did not know that his singing would have the power to put his
 "Majesty to sleep, because, had he known it, he would never have opened his mouth, in
 "order that the king might remain awake to hear the wailing and lamentations which his
 "poor subjects were making all night on account of the murders perpetrated on them in
 "the streets, as also in their own villages and lands; and he said that in the books of claims
 "and complaints for the 8 years previously till that date there had been entered the names
 "of more than 10,000 persons who had been put to death.

"This speech greatly displeased the king, and with an angry spirit he said that the first
 "thing requisite was to have him (the jester) and his companions hung, as from them
 "all the crimes proceeded, meaning the Qurchis. Nor is that a marvel, because they are
 "given no pay, and are forced to go into the streets and do such deeds, the more so as
 "they see that to doing justice and punishing wrong the king pays not the least heed nor
 "thought, as I have said. So it comes about that throughout the kingdom the roads are
 "unsafe, and inside their houses even people run great risks, and almost all the judges
 "allow themselves to be won over by force of money.

"It can be said truthfully that this king has never had the slightest inclination for warlike
 "enterprises (even though he discourses excellently about them in the proper terminology):
 "he is a man of little courage, and, if indeed on some occasion he has shown himself with the
 "army on campaign, he has only done it under compulsion, having never dared to show
 "his face to the enemy. On the contrary, to his great discredit, in his time he has lost
 "Baghdad, a city of the greatest importance, near the river Euphrates: Bitlis, which be-
 "longed to a lord . . . of some people called Kurds . . ." (another few names, unrecognizable, of towns also lost, follow).¹

¹ Narrative B states:

"The Persian people was far from obedient in the time of Shah Tahmasp. This arose from the discords between
 "the chief 'sultans' (governors); but after the sagacious princess" (i.e. Piri Khanum, sister of Isma'il II) "had joined

"distributed to the people, what was worth '1' being reckoned at '10'. No one, however, must show himself unwilling to take such clothing, but rather exhibit great gratitude for being allowed to have it.

"The same was done in the district of Alingia . . . although they use only the Turkish, Persian and Armenian languages, these places are called by the Persians 'Frankish'; the archbishop is designated 'Archbishop of Nakhchiwan', who twice has come to this city" (i.e. Venice), "as can be seen from the passports issued to him, one under his Highness Girolamo Priuli, in the year 1561, on the 13th June by secretary Vico, the other under his Highness Loredano in 1569 on the 26th April by secretary Garzoni: I have seen and read them, since for 48 days I was at that place where I had taken refuge to escape being pursued by the *chaoushes* sent after me by the Pasha of Erzerum.

"The king often sells jewels and deals in other merchandise, buying and bartering with that subtlety which a passable trader might use. It is true that six years ago he did a deed, which was meritorious rather than otherwise, since he took off every sort of Customs existing in his kingdom, which were perhaps heavier than in any other part of the world, because he was taking one-seventh part of all merchandise besides what the officials were appropriating.¹ It is, however, affirmed that he had that done because of some visions which he had in a dream, as he said that the angels had seized him by the neck, and demanded of him whether it were fitting for a king, who was reputed just and who came from the lineage of 'Ali, to ruin so many poor people by levying such cruel imposts and that they bade him free the people from these. The king had awoken full of fright, and commanded that in all parts of his kingdom the taxes should be abolished. As can clearly be perceived from day to day in his acts, he has come to regret that action of his, for in order to accumulate money he is doing thousands and thousands of deeds unworthy of a man, not to speak of a king, which I shall not relate in detail to Your Highness, in order not to weary you with the length of their recital, knowing that the matters previously narrated will suffice to make his character known: and I shall pass on to speak of his Court, which is divided under two headings—the household of the king, and the council of state.

"The king's household is really composed of three classes of persons—women: children of officers and nobles: and slaves bought by the king or received in gift by persons in the Haram (for that is how with them the saraglio is called, where are the women, and where he is waited on by them when he sleeps inside it)—they are all Circassian and Georgian slaves. When he sleeps outside he is waited on, for his menial needs such as being dressed, by male slaves, of whom he has some forty or fifty. They also have charge of the drapery and cloth, and the buttery. The third class of people who wait on him are noble youths, sons of officers and magnates, and they do not remain in the royal palace, but come on duty there every morning and afternoon from their houses, sometimes more in number, at others less, but usually about twenty. By turn the king is served by them with water, when washing his hands, when his shoes are brought for him to put on, and when they follow behind him in his walks in the gardens.

"The reward which the king gives to the male slaves, who serve him from the age of 15 to that of 25 or 30 years, always, however, with their beards shaved, is that, according as they have served him well, the king lends one 20, another 30, another 60,000 ducats at 20 per cent, sometimes for ten, at others for twenty years, he receiving the interest from it from year to year, while they afterwards lend the money out at 50, 70 and 80 per cent to gentlemen of the Court (who are after some offices or governorships from the king) against good guarantees and pledges of property such as goods and houses. In the case of those who have borrowed the money, if they do not settle with him who has advanced the money either by returning the capital sum or paying the interest on it,

¹ This would appear to be not Customs only, but a general excise tax on all merchandise of over 14 per cent—worth note for going as far back as the 1560's in Persia. As to the dream and the remission, even later than 1910 in parts of Persia tax-money levied by the civil authority was regarded as unclean, and unlawful in the religious sense.

"without any further pretext, or legal deed, they (the slaves) sell up the houses or property, nor is there any recourse for getting them back.

"The rewards for services given by the nobles are dignities and ranks at the Court, such as 'centurions', captains of the king's guards, and posts as 'sultans', by which is meant governorships of provinces. So much for service on the king's person.

"Truly speaking, there is only one council, in which there is no other president than the king, with the assistance of 12 'sultans' (i.e. governors) men of experience and acquainted with the provinces and affairs of state, although this number is liable to change from time to time by those governors who come to the capital, all of whom have the right of entry to the council. This council meets daily, except when the king goes to the bath and when his nails are cut, the hour for meeting both in summer and in winter being 22 o'clock¹ and later: and they continue to sit according to the business to be discussed till 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7 hours after nightfall. The king sits on a Mastab, not much raised above the ground, and behind his shoulders sit his sons, when they are at Court, where Sultan Haidar Mirza, who is as it were lieutenant for his father, usually is present and does not leave him. Opposite and in front of the king sit the 'governors', members of council according to age, and to the right and left the 'grand chancellors', three or four of them who are called Wazir. The king puts forward the business, and discourses about it, asking the opinions of the governors one by one, and as each one pronounces his opinion he rises from his place and comes near the king and speaks in so loud a voice that he can be heard by the other governors: and, if in the course of the discussion the king hears some argument which pleases him, he has it noted down by the 'grand chancellors', and often takes a note of it in his own hand: and so, one after the other, according as the king calls on the governors, they come and give him their opinions. The king sometimes settles the business in the council itself, when there are no questions to discuss: at others he has the opinions of the council brought to him and considers them by himself, and then makes a decision. In the number of these governors belonging to the council there is also included the chief Qurchi, captain of the king's guard, who although not a 'governor' is, however, a noble, and when he leaves that rank enters that of the 'governors'. The 'grand chancellors'² have no vote, and record nothing except they be questioned by the king: although they are highly honoured and much esteemed, they cannot, however, rise to the rank of 'sultan' nor to other military positions, even though they be of noble birth.

"The chancery consists rather of worthy, than of noble men: whilst the council is assembled they do not go away, but sleep there, guarding the king.

"Now, as it appears to me that I have so far said enough about the Court of this king, I shall at present speak of the extent of his dominions, and what is the method of governing the provinces and districts found in them, mention the chief towns, and how the king is loved. The country at present possessed by the king of Persia is bordered on the east by India, which lies between the Ganges and the Indus; on the west by the river Tigris, which divides Persia from Mesopotamia, now called Diarbakr, and this river flowing to the boundary of the region of Baghdad falls into the Euphrates, and in one and the same bed they both flow out beyond Basra and discharge their waters into the Persian Gulf to the south: and to the north, at the source of the river Tigris there is Lesser Armenia. . . all regions possessed by the Turks: on the south the boundary is Hurmuz and the coast of the Persian Gulf, on the north it is the Caspian Sea, which is called" (i.e. by the Persians) "the *Bahr*,³ and Tatarly belonging to the great Khan of Cathay.

¹ Perhaps this is the computation, known in Persia as *dasteh* which begins with sunset the previous day, so that "22 o'clock" might be 3 or 4 p.m. according to the season.

² Compare narrative B: "He has two 'grand chancellors' who are called by these people *muhr-dar*" (i.e. "keepers of the seal") "one of whom always carried the royal seal attached to his neck. . . ." This is *chancelier* and *cancelliere* in the French-Italian meaning of the word, as in their modern consulates, and equals a secretary with special authority to use and apply the seal, and functions.

³ In full in Persian *Bahr-i-Hazar*, *bahr* being Arabic for "sea".

"In this country there are the undermentioned provinces in the possession of the king, i.e. . . . Greater Armenia, Khurasan, Kashan, Harat . . . and Gilan, in there last-mentioned of which there are troubles at present, as I wrote to Your Highness, because the inhabitants had risen in revolt.¹ In the kingdom of Persia there are 62 towns, the principal being Tabriz, the capital of all the empire, Qazwin, Nakhchiwan, Shamakha, and others which I shall not name one by one; but I shall only say that throughout the whole kingdom there is not one which is walled—all are open places. The buildings are in sooth very ugly and of poor class. The houses all of mud, i.e. mud and chopped straw mixed together, nor are there mosques nor are there other edifices which could confer any beauty on this city. Although ordinarily the situations are very fine, the streets are horrid because of the quantity of dust, and hardly is it possible to pass along them, and in consequence in winter there is an abundance of mud.

"There is a very great abundance of corn usually, although it may rarely rain; but they are wont to bring down the water and irrigate the fields, one week in one direction, the next week in another. In this way they are able to convey so much water to the corn and vineyards that it suffices: and up inclines and in other places where water cannot be drawn they use them as pasture-grounds. There is also a great quantity of meat-stuffs and especially of sheep, and of such size that in Tabriz I have often seen the tails weighing 10 *batmans*² which in the reckoning of this country" (i.e. Venice, where he was writing) would be 40 lb. With that they are very dear in relation to the incredibly large quantity which is sent (into market), and this happens, I believe, because there is no nation in the world which eats more than the Persians do, it being an ordinary thing in all the old men, not to speak of the youths, to eat four times daily, and that because of the water supplies being so excellent, and assisting digestion.³ They are rather a poor people than otherwise. In the towns, in their houses they use few ornaments; everyone sleeps on the ground, and those who are of some quality use mattresses laid on carpets, the rest simple felts. The women ordinarily are all dark, but of very fine features and noble mien, although their dresses are not so smart as those of the Turkish women; but they are wont to clothe themselves in silk, wearing on their heads the *kafian*,⁴ allowing anyone they wish to see their faces, and hiding their faces when they do not wish them to be seen. They wear pearls and other jewels on their heads, and from this it comes about that pearls are of great price even in those countries, though it is not long since they began to be used.⁵

"The reverence and love that is borne by the whole people for the king, notwithstanding the matters already mentioned, for which it would appear that he ought the rather to be hated, is incredible, because they worship him not as their king but as a god. Those who are in sickness and misfortune call not so much on the name of God for help as they do on that of the king, making vows some of them to offer him presents, others to go and

¹ Narrative B mentions among the provinces subordinate to the Crown:

" . . . Gilan, Lar, Hawaizeh; but these three last are *only tributary*. . . . He also had some towns of the Georgians, who have now revolted against the Turks. Tribute is also paid by Lar, which is a province five days' distance from Hurmuz. Farther down there is the town of Hawaizeh, which is the seat of an Arab chief, on the borders of Basra, near the river Tigris, which flows all around it. Their chief . . . pays as tribute 20 horses and mares of very great value; but at present he is in rebellion, and has gone over to the Turks, as I wrote to your Highness. . . ."

Not a hint in either list of the Persian Gulf littoral being under the rule of the Shah. Yet

"Throughout the *sixteenth* century the Portuguese owing to their sea-power dominated the Persian Gulf to the intense anger of the Shahs, whose ports were raided and whose subjects were oppressed without mercy,"

is an assertion made by the writer of the revised survey of the *History of Persia* in the 14th ed. of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* under the initials "P. M. S." It would be interesting to have concrete evidence by dates, and authors produced for the latter part of that statement. The ports were, as related in these contemporary letters here quoted, controlled by Arab Shaikhs completely independent of the Shahs in Ardabil or Qazwin: what documents recording the anger of Isma'il I, Tahmasp I, Isma'il II, let alone Khudabandeh, can be cited? Resentment occurs with 'Abbas I after 1600, i.e. seventeenth century.

² The *batman*-*i*-*Tabriz* of modern times, the standard weight for customs purposes, has been reckoned as 6.5 lb. avoirdupois, English.

³ Alessandri could hardly have travelled in southern Persia, where the water supply over large areas is notoriously cruel on the digestion—*experto crede*: in comparison with natives of India the Persian peasant eats copiously.

⁴ By *kafian* the black *chadar* = veil, or sheet, in which the women shroud themselves, is probably meant.

⁵ For jewellers and others to note—in 1574 the vogue for pearls was fresh in that part of the East.

"kiss the door of his palace: and that family considers itself happy which is able to obtain "some clothes or shoes of the king or indeed some of the water with which he has washed "his hands, using the same (as a talisman) against fever. Not to speak of infinite other "things which might be said in this connection, not only the common people, but his sons "too and the governors, usually when they speak to him, appear unable to find epithets "fitting for such exaltedness. They say to him 'Thou art our faith, and we believe in thee'. "Up to such a degree of reverence do they pay him in the neighbouring towns; but in the "villages and places farther off many hold that he (the king), besides having the spirit of "prophecy, resuscitates the dead and does other similar miracles; and they say that, just "as 'Ali, their principal saint, had 11 sons, so this king too has received by God's grace the "favour of 11 sons.

"It is true that in the city of Tabriz he is not held in such great veneration as in other "places: and for that reason it is said that he left there, and went to remain at Qazwin, "seeing that he was not esteemed according as he desired."

But compare B for a reason for the change of capital less inconsequent, and more sensible:

"... and because Qazwin, a town of his kingdom with a district 18 leagues in "length by 13 in breadth is situated in the centre of the kingdom in a very strong "position between high mountains, on which the snow lies continually, and for that "reason it appeared to him a secure and strong place, he chose it for his chief residence: "and from the township of ill fame it had previously been (because in it were confined "criminals who had not been put to death, as the etymology of the name denotes, for "Qazwin means 'place of punishment') it has become a very noble town adorned with "very large buildings and gardens, on which much expense has been incurred, among "them one belonging to the king himself which is 3 leagues in circumference, and from "its beauty is called Bihisht (in our language 'Paradise'). This town is very populous, "and they say that whenever the king summons them he can always have 3,000 horse- "men ready. It is about 3 leagues round."

"With regard to the city being split into two factions, one of which is called Hamidlay "[? sic] the other Emicardurla [? sic], there being nine heads of wards in them, five in one "faction, four belonging to the other, to which all the citizens—who may be 12,000 in "number—appertain, there have been many quarrels between these factions in the past, "when they slew one another, and neither the king nor anyone else was able to remedy the "state of affairs, seeing that there was a 300-year-old hatred between these two parties; and "it may be definitely asserted that the heads of the wards were the lords of the town rather "than the king himself.¹ Now they are at peace with one another and united. But in "that connection I do not wish to omit to tell Your Highness that, as at the beginning of "their month of fasting the price of meat had risen a little above the ordinary, these heads "of the wards sent to the governor's palace and killed all the governor's underlings, and "if the governor had taken any action he would also have been put to death; while those "officials who were absent, they (the heads of the wards) went to their houses and pulled "down their houses, and killed them, and bore their heads to the public square, not minding "whether they did such deeds by day or by night; and nothing could be done in view of "their being united. It is true that nothing disreputable has been learnt about these men "in regard to their treatment of private individuals, but in the past they have killed gover- "nors merely in order to preserve a certain public liberty of action and ancient privileges

¹ Up till the World War, 1914, the enmity between the inhabitants of the various quarters, or wards, in towns of southern Persia (at any rate—and possibly over the greater part of the country) between the Haidari and Nai'mati sections, or however named—for instance, between Bihbihan and Qanawat, separated only by a narrow street, or in Bushire or in Jahrum, Kazarun and elsewhere—was such that on days of processions, during festival times, or when some quarrel embittered relations, the inhabitant of one ward could not pass into the other without risk of attack: and at times fierce fighting and shooting would break out between them.

"they had. I think it well to say something special about the town, because, as I have said, 'it is the capital of the whole realm.'" (This is Qazwin, of which he speaks in 1574, not 'Isfahan, which became capital only with Shah 'Abbas I.)

"It is situated in a great plain, not very far distant from some low mountains, and near 'it is a hill, on which it can be seen that in ancient times there was a castle: although there 'are no walls, the circuit (of the town) is some 15 miles or more . . . there is almost a 'short day's journey from a place named Casan [*sic*] to Qazwin, but an infinite number of 'gardens and empty spaces on the way. There are 45 outlying hamlets, and in each 'hamlet a bazar, so that it can be said that each of these hamlets is a little vill in itself 'abounding in everything, but particularly in things to eat. The climate is most pleasant, 'both in winter and summer, the fruit superior in quality to that of any other country.

"This is a trading town, merchandise and caravans concentrating here from all parts 'of the kingdom; but at present mercantile business is suffering greatly on account of the 'state of war, in which Your Highness is with the Turks; two bales of silk (in which the 'country is very rich) previously worth 400 sequins are now selling for less than 200. 'Spices come by way of Hurmuz, but there is nobody that looks at them; because their 'usual market was Aleppo; and now that there is no one with whom to make contracts 'of sale, they are lying abandoned. For a short time past small amounts have been taken 'to Constantinople by land, and thence to — (unrecognizable) being distributed 'through Poland and going on through — and thence to Denmark, Sweden and 'other places; but the expenses are so heavy that the profits are very small, even if there 'be no loss, some Armenians having made the experiment: and I have found them (the 'spices) in Tabriz and in Leopoli" (i.e. Poland). "Such business will be seen the more 'likely to cool off, as an English gentleman, named Mr. Thomas from London, who had 'come to Qazwin with large quantities of woollen goods by way of Muscovy under the 'style of 'ambassador from the Queen', having happened to die, the governor of Shirwan 'detained his goods, so that the companions (of Mr. Thomas) had to spend a large sum of 'money in order to regain possession of them. Thus for this reason too it should not be 'hoped that business will be likely to continue.

"In the province of Khurasan there are silk stuffs, especially velvets which can rival 'those of the Genoese and from other places. They also manufacture satins and damasks, 'but not with that finish and beauty which they are wont to have in Italy: and they are 'cheap. In the whole land of Persia there are no mines of gold or silver, nor even of 'copper, but only of iron: those who bring silver from Turkey into Persia gain 20 per cent, 'and on gold pieces 14 to 15 per cent: on copper sometimes 15 and sometimes 20 per cent. 'It is true that the expenses are heavy.

"Now, coming to the finances of this king, it appears to me necessary to consider chiefly 'the revenues he has as the main thing. Though usually in all countries these are ob- 'tained from imports as their principal basis, since there are no import duties in this 'country, as I have told Your Highness, I will say that on produce of the soil, such as 'wheat and other grain, the king gets one-seventh: from vineyards and pastures, on 1,000 'orchi [*? sic*] of land he gets 60 shahi yearly, which in our money make 4 gold sequins each 'and a little over. These orchi are measures of theirs, there may be upwards of 100 to a 'field (so that 1,000 would equal 9 fields; and thus they pay little less than half a ducat for 'a field): on houses 5 per cent (as tribute from the Christians in some districts 5 ducats per 'household, in some other 7 or 8, according to the value and productivity of the districts 'they inhabit): on animals, for every 40 sheep yearly they pay 15 bisti, which in our 'money make 3 lire, 15 soldi, while on male animals they pay 10 bisti annually, which in our 'money make 2 lire 10 soldi.

"From these sources are obtained the revenues of the king, which are said at present to 'exceed the sum of three millions gold.¹

¹ Compare narrative B.

"The revenues of the kingdom of Persia, though I have been unable to obtain details of each province separately

"The expenditure which really issues from his exchequer is very small, because he is obliged to pay only 5,000 soldiers, called by them Qurchis, who are the guards of his person, and chosen from among the best and finest-looking people in his dominions. Nor does he pay even these in cash, but instead of salaries gives them clothing and horses, putting these at such prices as suits him. It is true that to his eleven sons, each of whom, as I have said, has a separate and dignified Court, it is not known what he gives. . . .

" . . . In general they are a fine-looking race, strong and well built, very courageous and warlike. For defensive arms they use the cuirass, the targe (shield) and there are many too who wear helmets: for the offensive the sword, arrow and arquebuse, and there is not a soldier who does not use the last-named; they have brought their skill in it to such a pitch of perfection that it surpasses (what is seen) anywhere else. The barrels of these arquebuses are 7 palms¹ in length. The soldier carries less than 3 ounces of shot, disposing of it cleverly so that it does not hinder him from drawing his bow, or wielding the sword, while the shield is held attached to the saddle-bow. When there is no need to use it the arquebuse is slung behind the back with such facility that one thing does not get in the way of the other.² The horses have been brought to such a degree of fine looks and class that there is no need to import them from elsewhere: and this has come about since the death of Sultan Bayazid.³ For that prince came into Persia with very fine horses from Karamania and excellent Arab mares, which were given him on his march: and after the present king had had him killed there were some 10,000 horses and mares left. From that source there has sprung so fine a race that the Ottomans have not the like. There were also left behind by Bayazid 30 pieces of artillery which were taken to Shamakha near the Caspian Sea, not to mention money and other booty. As to the fortresses of the king, he has had the lands towards the Turkish frontiers everywhere abandoned for 6 or 7 days' journey, and the forts, that were there, destroyed, in order to protect himself, and the more so that the Turks may not be taken with the desire to take possession of them, and to hold them. . . . This king lays claim to the regions taken from him by the Ottoman emperors, beginning from the river Euphrates and in that direction as far as Baghdad, and towards the west to the district of Diarbakr and Lesser Armenia, in which are included Karkamish, Urfa, Mardin, . . . Bitlis, Van, . . . Ersinjan, Baibourt, Tokat and

" . . . all together amount to the total of four million gold pieces, some considering them to be 4½ millions. In ancient times they amounted to a very much larger sum, but the tyranny of the kings, who extract five for one, has caused it to diminish. . . . Besides this, there is an infinite number of villages and manors all assigned for the pay of the cavalry, the lowest pay of whom is 100 ducats each per annum, although they extract a much larger sum, they themselves having the lands worked, and getting the triple out of it. In this manner he also has part of his infantry paid, and 4,000 Qurchis whom he has as his guards . . . As to the expenditure he (the Shah) has 70 'sultans' (governors) who are deputed as governors of the towns, and who are paid from the treasuries of these from ten to thirty thousand ducats yearly each, but with the obligation to maintain from 300 to 400 or 500 (as the case may be) cavalry and infantry, who must all be kept ready for any service. He pays his 2,000 guards from 100 to 160 ducats each yearly, until there is an opportunity of rewarding them in the villages . . . and the majority of the arquebusiers are paid from his own treasury. These are the largest expenses the Crown has."

¹ A Roman "palm" measured about 25 centimetres.

² Compare narrative B:

"The military force, which the said king has, is 10,000 cavalry, paid as has been stated, all known men, practised in arms and entirely faithful to their king: and he could possess more of them, if he were to pay them. He has a very large number of infantrymen, of whom, they say, for any need of his he can have 200,000 or even 250,000: and it is asserted that of those 200,000 there are 100,000 arquebuse men, who are partly paid by the villages and manors, but principally from the king's own treasury. The arms used by the cavalry are the lance—not longer than 5 palms—the bow, and the scimitar, of which above every other nation they know the art, and they consider it the chief arm of all they use. For defence they wear shirts of mail, some of them cuirasses after our style. They wear armour on the right arm, as do the light cavalry for safety, when employing the sword. The horses have armour, but of plates so thin that arrows pierce them, and with it their head, breast and crupper are covered: there are 10 per cent of them like these. The infantry carry scimitar and bow, and the arquebuse men musket and scimitar.

"In his realm there are horses of supreme excellence, costing 1,000 to 2,000 scudi each, broken or schooled to riding—school after their fashion, which is to gallop, trot and turn to either hand, and which are, when mounted, most fiery and unruly, so that it would seem impossible for anyone to tame them."

³ Sultan Bayazid, already met in these pages, fourth son of Sulaiman the "Legislator", born about 1526, rebelled against his father, and his troops being beaten at Konieh in 1559, taking with him a large retinue he crossed the border and took asylum with Tahmasp I of Persia. According to this account of Alessandri Tahmasp had him killed; the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed., states that Tahmasp basely surrendered him on the stern demand of Sulaiman.

"other places. He is in relations with, and on him there depends a prince named — ruler over the Georgians, who pays him 20,000 scudi yearly as tribute, and his country lies near the Caspian Sea: in time of war this prince should be able to serve under the king with 10,000 mounted Georgians, all men of valour. There are also some petty Turkish lords called Kurds, who inhabit some mountains in Lesser Armenia in the direction of that mountain range which lies towards Georgia and is owned by the Turks on the side towards the Black Sea. . . ."

Vincenzo degl'Alessandri ends his account by stating that he was also submitting to the Doge plans of the chief ports and places on the Black Sea, where he had noticed preparations of shipping being actively made in readiness for the coming year: and by referring to his sufferings on his Persian journey,

"having been cruelly bastinadoed on the soles of my feet¹ at Erzerum because of some Turkish merchants who were taking copper into Persia without having come to an agreement with the Nazir, i.e. supervisor: I was taken and beaten and paid for myself and servant 2,000 aspri, which equal 400 scudi."

Narrative B gives, as it were, the sequel to Alessandri's account:

"This Shah Tahmasp was a most cruel tyrant who deprived everyone he saw rich, and with any influence in his kingdom, of their goods and, if he did not deprive them of life, had their eyes put out. He had confidence in no captain or knight of his nor did he want anyone's advice. He was most miserly, so that to gain money he would send to the bazars his own clothing. He kept back the pay, which he had promised his soldiers, so that 15,000 and more of them abandoned Persia, making themselves vassals of the Tatars, others of the king of India, in order to be no longer subject to such a tyrant. He was wont to renew the coinage from year to year, causing first less than half to be recovered, then when he had it coined, he would prohibit circulation of the first, which almost all later was cast into his mint . . . from this he may well have had many times in his city of Qazwin 400,000 or 450,000 ducats a year. He would not make a concession of it to anyone, saying that what those people wanted to gain in profits, he wanted for himself. In this way he extracted an enormous sum of money out of it, which is not included in the statement of his revenues. At his death there were found in his possession in gold and silver and jewels (a thing which appears impossible to credit, and confirmation of it has been given me from several quarters) 80 million ducats, among which 17 millions coined in gold marks. I omit horses, mules and camels to the number of 100,000.

"He died on the 11th May, 1576,² having reigned 50 years, as has been said.

"But before he died he drew up his will, in which he declared as his successor Isma'il, his second son,³ because Muhammad Khudabandeh, the present king, was given over to matters of religion and was short-sighted, and because he had learnt on one occasion that he (Muhammad Khudabandeh) wanted to kill the Daruga, or governor of the city, who was the fourth Wazir, created over and above the ordinary, named Absalom Baig Sinjabi [*? sic*], who had planned to kill him (Tahmasp) and Shah Isma'il his son, and put on the throne Sultan Haidar, his third son, born of a Georgian woman. "This was only because he ('Absalom Baig) had as his ward another son of the king

¹ Till 1908 in Persia the bastinado was still a common method of punishment, and money had to be given to those administering it.

² Narrative C (Misc. Arm. II, 74, p. 241), states that he died at Qazwin, in June 1577—perhaps a copyist's mistake as to the year, a reign of 52 years, going by E. G. Browne's *Catalogue of Manuscripts in Cambridge University Library*, he having succeeded 22.5.1524.

³ Fr. du Cerceau's edition of *Krusinski's Memoirs*, 1740, states that Tahmasp nominated for his successor Haidar Mirza; but the above, B, is a contemporary narrative.

"named Sultan Mustafa, and he hoped in this way in his position as governor to put him forward so that he himself would remain superintendent of the whole kingdom. "He (Tahmasp) determined to put to death Sultan Haidar his son, and with that object he sent to summon three of his captains. One of them was named Sultan Ibrahim Mirza, his nephew, who was then in the province of — (? Mashhad—? Mazandaran) in some forts of his, distant 6 or 7 days' journey from Qazwin by the eastern gate. "He (Tahmasp) notified him to join him with all the forces he could raise: and he (Sultan Ibrahim Mirza) arrived with 12,000 horse, taking up his quarters in the royal palace, and he received authority to govern and the office of principal chamberlain with the right to wear a sword, which is granted to no one. The second was Mirza 'Ali Sultan, the third —. With these he (Tahmasp) conferred about what was to be done: and it was decided to put to death Sultan Haidar, this being contrary to the custom of Shah Tahmasp, who did not like asking advice, nor did he trust his captains or anyone. They sent a summons to Haidar from his father, having him told that the latter before he closed his eyes wished to see him and make him his successor. "The young man, obedient and perhaps credulous too, appeared and directly he came within sight of his father, the king told an officer of his to do his duty: so the officer took the wretched Haidar and put him in chains in a very dark room under a very strong guard.

"When the king was dead, his death was kept secret, all the gates of the palace being kept shut. Seeing that, the rebel governor unwilling to delay any longer in having Haidar proclaimed king went sword in hand to the palace with a force of 15,000 men,¹ made up of his relatives and followers; and, the first, second and third gates having been thrown down, they began to shout after their fashion for 'Haidar their king'. "Perceiving the risk, if they were to delay any longer, the four sultans (governors) who were guarding the palace, sent a Circassian named — into the room where Haidar was confined, and had him decapitated, and his head by their orders was thrown down the steps to the feet of the horse on which was mounted the rebel governor (who had been continuing to shout for 'Shah' Haidar); calling out to him: 'Take the head of your king', with many words of abuse while they reproached him for his disloyalty. "Since they too had been provided with a force of men and assistance secretly, they attacked the crowd, cutting to pieces as many as they met, and they did not leave alive anyone whether small or grown-up of either sex of the race of the (rebel) captain and his followers, sacking their houses and razing them to the foundations. The (rebel) governor saved himself by flight with no more than 1,000 men, and was deserted by them too because of the hunger and deprivations which they suffered. "Among them was Mustafa, the son of the king already mentioned, who had been with him, and who went off to Qum, to the queen-mother of Isma'il and of the present king, a Turkman by race, and aunt of Amir Khan (who at present is captain-general and is called by the surname 'Sword of Persia'), hoping by her mediation to save his life. But he did not succeed in his design; the contrary happened, for after some days he was killed, together with six others of his brothers.² When the (rebel) governor saw himself abandoned, he resolved to take refuge with the Turks, and in order not to be recognized clothed himself as a doctor; but when passing over some mountains he was recognized and taken prisoner by some hunters belonging to Absalom Baig his enemy, to whom they led him, and the latter had him kept under guard till the arrival of Isma'il, by whose instructions he was put to death, as will be told farther on. "Because of the looting and bloodshed which followed in the town, where on account

¹ The Ustaghı tribe, but the large figures used here, and elsewhere in contemporary narratives or letters from Persia, should be regarded sceptically, as wild estimates: with the exception of distances, which are constantly underestimated, all estimates, especially in reply to questions, are much exaggerated.

² The barbarous habit of a general fratricide on the succession of a new monarch had been used by Sultan Selim I of Turkey in 1512: it was followed by several of the Safawis; but that after Tahmasp I's death would appear to be the first on a large scale.

"of there being no sovereign few were safe in their own houses, on the 17th" (? May 1576) "Absalom Baig and the other three 'captains' of the dead king, together with "a great concourse of people, went through the town and bazars, in order to reassure "the people and encourage everyone to return to his business, saying that Shah Isma'il "could not do otherwise than appear before long. They sent and had it cried round "about that, under pain of death, no one should venture to molest any house, or person "in the town: and these edicts were afterwards rigorously enforced, because, wherever "malefactors were found, some had their hands amputated, others their feet, many "were beheaded, according as their crime deserved, the heads being put on the points "of spears and carried round the town and through the bazars. By these measures they "put an end to the affright, and reassured the minds of everyone. They also caused "the kettledrums¹ to be beaten at midday and had rejoicings made, with much shouting "that 'the king was near at hand': and this they did only to keep in check anyone who "might have a mind to continue looting.

"On the following day, which was the 18th" (? May 1576), "in the great mosque "Shah Isma'il was proclaimed king: and at once all the 'captains' and soldiers, who "were not in charge of the town, and all those from the surrounding towns, went to "fetch the king who was still in the fortress at Caanam² [*Psic*] a castle under the control "of the town of Ardabil and to the north of it, some 10 days' march distant from Qazwin, "where he had been exiled by his father on account of the animosity he displayed against "the Turks and because, as he was fierce by nature, Shah Tahmasp apprehended that "he might fall on the border country and cause the Turkish Sultan to go to war with "him (Tahmasp): and there he had remained 16 years.

"When the soldiers arrived in sight of the castle they began to shout 'Shah Isma'il'" "which means king Isma'il, displaying many signs of gladness. But he put no trust in "this, nor did the captain guarding him, who was by blood a relative of the rebel "governor, and who wanted to go and attack them, but was restrained by Isma'il, who "bade him to make no movement, seeing that the truth would become known before "long. And so it was that they had not remained long before from all sides they saw "people arriving and the countryside being filled by soldiers shouting all together "'Shah Isma'il'. Being thus made sure of the fact he (Isma'il) came down from the "fortress, and the captain, who had previously been unwilling to credit it, was the "first to kiss his foot and, with a sword tied to his neck, to ask pardon, should he have "offended him, because (he said) all he had done was in order not to disobey the orders "given him by the king, Isma'il's father, who so many years previously had placed him "(Shah Isma'il) in his charge. Isma'il not only pardoned him, but granted to a son "of his the governorship of Tabriz.

"After the captain everyone else hastened to kiss the foot of their new king, who, "seeing that there had already assembled more than 80,000, with perhaps 50,000 tents, "decided to set out for Qazwin. Half-way there, they were met by Sultan Ibrahim "Mirza, his cousin german on his father's side also his brother-in-law, who dismounted "to pay honour to the king, who did the like, embracing him and greeting him warmly. "After many complimentary speeches he (Isma'il) created him his captain-general, "and confirmed him in the same high post which his father (Tahmasp) had given him, "with instructions that his tent should be pitched opposite the royal tents, though this "had never at any time been customary.

"Arrived on the 14th July in sight of the town of Qazwin, he camped there and on "the following day there was led before him in chains the rebel governor, to whom he "(the king) said many words befitting his faithlessness and then drove him from his "presence, keeping him for a few days before having him put to death, as he did later. "In that place he remained till the 17th (July), granting many favours and ordering

¹ The word used in the Italian manuscripts is *gnacchere*, evidently the *naqareh khaneh* of Persian.

² Fr. du Cerceau's edition of *Krusinski's Memoirs* gives the name of the fort as Kankai.

"many punishments according to the deserts of the persons concerned. When they "left that place, he proceeded to the gate of the town, riding 12 horses, i.e. now one, "now another, in allusion to the twelve sons of 'Ali his prophet: and, because he was "afraid lest some shot from an arquebuse should be fired at him and he should be "killed, with a score of his most trusted men he went by a street along which he was "not expected to pass to the garden gate, and through that into the royal palace, causing "his captain-general to proceed in procession under the (royal) umbrella,¹ by the "usual route, where all the people stood awaiting him.

"When Isma'il had been securely seated on his throne, it was not long before he "became more cruel than anyone else had been, having no mercy on any of the race "of the rebel governor, nor even on his own brother-in-law, appointed by him his "captain-general, whom he had put to death together with ten brothers² of his own, "some by poison, some strangled—all except the present king who was at Shiraz, 21 "days' journey distant from Qazwin, and whom he could never get into his hands: "instead of whom he killed a son of his (i.e. Muhammad Khudabandeh's ?) and two "of his cousins. He also had put to death all the chief governors (sultans) who had "been at his father's Court, saying that 'the royal tents could not be held up by old "ropes'. He even reddened with blood his own hands, killing many of them with his "own sword, saying that he wanted to see whether it would cut: wherefore, by the "reckoning made, it was estimated that by his own hands or by his orders during the "brief period of his reign there were killed about 12,000 persons, without counting those "whom he deprived of eyesight and sent into exile.

"For some objective he had in view, he was thinking of abandoning the creed of 'Ali "and taking that of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman, which is that professed by the "Turks: and he gave evidence of this by putting out the eyes of a 'Khalifah' of his, or "leading personage in his creed after the Mujtahidin, their 'popes', and sending him "away to a mosque, which is in the city of Imam Riza³ in the province of Khurasan, "distant from Qazwin 14 days' march, and by many other outrages and insults offered "to many other spiritual leaders. All this being observed by the chief personages who "had remained alive in the realm they made a conspiracy together with a sister of the "king, called Piri Khanum, against whom he had perpetrated many outrageous actions, "taking away more than 200,000 ducats of hers, and all the male and female slaves she "had, causing her to live in straitened circumstances a life full of hardships, she being "a woman of some thirty years, shrewd and prudent, who had been esteemed and "trusted by their father. Together they devised the poison, putting it in some pills "of opium, which he (Isma'il) was wont to eat, and then placing them in a small wallet "which was carried by the son of a captain trusted by him, who had always remained "by him. According to his wont the king took some (of the pills), and on the following "night, which was the 25th November in the year 1577, vigil of S. Catharine's "day, he died, being aged 44 years, and having reigned only 1 year, 7 months, "6 days.⁴

"He died at the time when he intended to have proclaimed the creed" (i.e. the Sunni) "which he desired to have observed at the end of his Ramazan" (month of fasting); "and he wanted it to be observed by all, promising very large gifts to all "those who imitated him, and threatening with a cruel death those who obstinately "refused: this was the cause of his death being accelerated. . . ."

¹ The word *ombrella* is used in the Italian, so that in 1570 in Persia as in India in this century, the processional umbrella was a symbol of sovereignty.

² The *suoi* seems to refer to Isma'il not Sultan Ibrahim Mirza: yet Tahmasp had 11 sons, and 6 with Haidar and Mustafa had already been slain in this narrative.

³ Spelt in the manuscript "Momorosa": at Mashhad is the shrine of Imam Riza, one of the chief places of pilgrimage of the Shi'ahs.

⁴ The 25th is S. Catharine's Day. But this statement, 1 year, 7 months, 6 days, does not accord with that previous that Tahmasp died 11.5.1576, which would make 1 year, 6 months, 14 days solar: nor even if lunar computation be meant.

Narrative C has a version of the immediate reasons for the conspiracy to kill Shah Isma'il II completely at variance with the above:

"So, being desirous of having himself crowned in the city of Baghdad, on the tomb of Husain, his 'cousin' the prophet, but, unable to go there without an army, because it is a land held by the Turks and very well guarded, he distributed horses and money to his people, so that they should set themselves in array to proceed, arms in hand, for his crowning and the girding on of the sword, as is their practice. For their kings never wear girded on the sword unless they have first been crowned. "Because he knew that all the councillors and other enemies of his father were also very great enemies of his own, he planned to put them to death—as he did: and he chose others for his councillors, who urged him to send ambassadors to the Turks and confirm the terms of peace which had reigned between their fathers. But he (Isma'il) would not agree to such counsel, because in his heart he was a pronounced enemy of the Turkish Sultan; and he made the excuse that the Turkish Sultan had not deigned to send ambassadors to congratulate him on his being set at liberty and his accession to the throne. Seeing that he was obstinate and determined in his intentions, despite the great persuasion they had used in pointing out to him many risks and losses which might occur in his realm, whenever he should go to war. Nevertheless, more obstinate than ever, he began to put himself in a position to wage war: and they determined to put him to death in some way or other. They adopted the expedient of poisoning him, and did so by suborning a sweetheart of his, wife of one of his father's councillors, whom he had killed: and they caused her to give him, as they were wont, some opium which was poisoned, and deprived him of life in the month of October of the same year¹ in which he was set free from his prison."

B

"The facts were kept secret by the prudent lady, and, in order to obviate any great disturbance, she summoned the chief 'captains', accomplices of hers in the king's death, who were Hamid [? sic] Khan, Khalid [? sic] Khan, Aqa Wali Sultan,² . . . Ahmad Sultan, and two others, captains and one of them captain of the guard; and she harangued them, saying that in their hands lay that rich empire; if they desired to ruin it by pursuing private animosities they were doing very wrong. But it was now time for them to lay aside any ill-intention they might have one against the other, and not give delight to the Turks and Tatars, who lived on the frontiers of the empire and who desired no better opportunity to subjugate them and divide up the kingdom, adding that all she said to them was for their benefit and that of their successors not for herself . . . and in order that such great efforts by her grandfather and father might not be wasted and lost by their quarrels, and in a moment the house and line of their prophet Shaikh Sufi be annihilated. She continued with words so effective (a thing unusual in a woman, and particularly in those regions) and with such eloquence that she got them to desist from every evil design they had against one another, and to make friends in her presence . . . having them swear . . . to preserve the throne for Muhammad Khudabandeh, her brother.

"In these circumstances the talk spread in the town that the king was dead, so the populace rose and, making a great tumult, went to the royal residence, crying out that they wished to see their king. His sister together with the seven 'captains' decided to cause one clothed in the royal garments to appear on a high roof and address the crowd in a loud voice such as Isma'il had been accustomed to use, and to make with

¹ October 1576 is at variance with the preceding account B, which is precise as to the 25th November being the date. As to the year, C account conflicts with B, and seems less reliable.

² These names in the manuscript copy are so misspelt as to be unrecognizable.

"his hands signs bidding them to keep quiet. They did so and returned to their homes.

"The deception had been successful; but, anticipating worse, were the populace to come to know the truth as was necessary, because the death of the king could not be kept indefinitely concealed, the sagacious lady ordered that all the militia then collected at Qazwin should be placed under the control of those seven 'captains' . . . and when all had been assembled she disclosed to them the death of the king, exhorting them to keep the country in peace and quiet until the arrival of the new king. In order that this might the more easily be contrived, the town was divided into seven quarters, and the control of them allotted to the seven 'captains' severally. . . . She was then able to arrange for tents and other things necessary from Qazwin and surrounding towns to be dispatched, so as to have the new king brought from Shiraz,¹ where he still is, as has been said.

"He" (Muhammad Khudabandeh) "at once set out, and entered Qazwin 25.1.1577,² being then 45 or 46³ years of age, and quite grey, although he dyed his beard, handsome in features and his body well proportioned; but he had an impediment in his sight, so that when he looked down he could see nothing, but when he raised his eyes aloft he could see as well as anyone. But, before he came to Qazwin he sent to summon Samal [? *sic*] Sultan, a good captain and liked more than any other by the soldiers, an uncle of Piri Khanum, his" (the king's) "sister, to have him killed and so that he should not prevent him (the king) from doing the like to his sister, notwithstanding all she had done to preserve the crown for him.

". . . Although he suspected the good faith of the king and apprehended that the latter would put him to death, nevertheless he went, but first caused his niece to retire to her house, which he had had fortified, leaving to guard her a large number of men, to whom he entrusted her, giving her everything valuable he possessed, so that they might be the more ready to die in her defence. When he reached the king, he was received affectionately, without the least sign of any evil intention being displayed, and, the more to reassure him, he (Muhammad Khudabandeh) confirmed him in the position of 'grand chancellor' (?) (chief secretary) "which he had held under Shah Isma'il. But no sooner had the king left him than he was at once miserably strangled, according to orders previously given. And at once he" (Muhammad Khudabandeh) "sent to have the like done to Piri Khanum, his sister, who deserved so well of him: and that was to please the queen his wife, who hated her, more on account of the jealousy she bore her for being so wideawake and sagacious a lady. At the same time he had also put to death Aqa Wali Sultan, one of the seven 'captains' who had preserved the crown for him, merely because Aqa Wali Sultan formerly while governor of Shiraz had behaved harshly towards him (Muhammad Khudabandeh) when he resided there, and because he had been a great friend of his brother (Shah Isma'il), to a son of whom, aged 4 months, he was acting as guardian and who was also put cruelly to death.

"When the king had entered the town, he made very liberal gifts of hundreds and thousands of ducats, and recalled the old servants of his father, who had been sent into exile by Isma'il, and restored to them their property and customary dignities. He had immediately liberated the ambassadors from the Tatars, who were confined in a fort where his brother had put them, and with gifts and courteous words he manifested to them the displeasure he felt at the ill-procedure and wrong done them by his brother, and that he was very ready to preserve the like friendly relations which

¹ Fr. du Cerceau's edition of *Fr. Krusinski's Memoirs* gives not Shiraz but "in the province of Khurasan," which agrees more than Shiraz with the contemporary account by A, i.e. "a small government in the province of Khurasan, called Cheri" (? *sic* Harat). One English historian, however, has it that Khudabandeh Mirza had been governing Khurasan, but was later appointed to Fars.

² The year being reckoned as beginning in March this would be 25.1.1578 according to modern computation.

³ This tallies with Alessandri's statement of 1574 in A that he was about 43 then.

"his father had maintained, so that they departed well content. He did the same in "the case of a number of ambassadors from the king of India. There were also there "some Turkish *chaoushes*, eight in number, two of them who had come by instructions "of the son of Muhammad Pasha and the others by orders from Baghdad, Erzerum and "Karkamish, whom he caused to be handed over to four of the principal 'captains' "for the latter to keep under guard until his further directions. He did this on account "of the rumours (which had already been bruited during his brother's time) that the "Turks were intending to send and fortify Kars in contradiction to the convention and "terms of peace between Sulaiman and Shah Tahmasp.

"Their claims were that they wanted back the fortune left in that country" (Persia) "by Bayazid, who had fled into Persia at the time his father, Sultan Sulaiman, was "pursuing him: after the death of Bayazid there had remained in Persia 17 pieces of "small artillery, one of 50 and a 'terrier' of 120, together with a large number of arque- "buses. Sultan Murad was demanding the restoration of this property—or, as the "Turks call it, 'treasure'—perhaps because he was seeking an opportunity to break the "peace with the Persians in order to occupy the town and district of Shirwan. They "say this had been discovered in a letter brought to Shah Isma'il by one of the princes "in Shirwan, in which Murad promised those people 50,000 arquebuse men, if they "would accept him as their suzerain.

"That was the cause why there was talk of war, which was all the more certain, "because Isma'il had been thinking of going to Baghdad to gird on the sword and "perform the ceremonies which were customarily observed by his ancestors. After the "accession of the present Shah, and he had found men angry and perturbed, and had "learnt of the design of Murad to wage war by fortifying Kars contrary to the terms of "the peace concluded between Sulaiman and Shah Tahmasp, his father, and when he "perceived that fortifications were briskly proceeding, he directed his vassals not to "allow them to advance any further. And so, inevitably, there ensued skirmishes and "losses, and damage done on one side or the other in the border towns and places. "Since daily the armed forces increased in numbers, and the war grew more bitter and "overt, on that account Mustafa (Pasha) was dispatched with a very powerful army: "and thence there sprang such extensive ruin as later occurred.

"From no other causes have these two very powerful princes come to blows than those "given above, although some will have it that everything had its genesis in the matter "of religion" (i.e. Shiah-Sunni antagonism).

Narrative C varies considerably as to the origin of the war:

"Khudabandeh, having gone to the capital to take possession of the throne, was "accepted as their king by the people with much rejoicing. According to the usage "of kings and princes who desire to provide for their affairs of state in the matter of "peace or war, he asked the counsel of his new councillors as to what he ought to "do with the Turks—whether he should dispatch an ambassador to the Sultan, or "had better wait and see whether the latter would send ambassadors to congratulate "him on his succession to the throne. His councillors persuaded him to wait and "see whether the Turks sent ambassadors to him for the purpose mentioned, and "then to try and have confirmed the terms of peace which existed between their "respective fathers. He accepted this advice. When some months had passed, "and the Turkish Sultan had not sent anyone, nor even written to him, the principal "men in his empire of Persia, in order to demonstrate their goodwill, and the great "love they bore their king and lord, went to him and offered, should his Majesty "wish to make war, to put their lives and property at his service: and he willingly "accepted the offer and their goodwill: and he prepared to wage war, and attack "too the province of Baghdad, in order to acquire it, especially because in it there

"is, as they say, the body of one of their greatest saints, named Imam Husain, his "prophet!

"This project of the king of Persia becoming known in the districts and provinces "bordering those of the Turks, the Pashas and governors of the latter wrote to their "master exhorting him to be the first to begin the war: and (they said), should it "please his Majesty to attack, he should give them leave to proceed to do so, because "they would then go off and inflict injury on the districts and provinces of the king "of Persia. When the news reached Constantinople, the Sultan at once summoned "to him his Pashas and took counsel with them regarding the course to be followed: "they in their advice replied that for the honour of his Majesty it would be well for "him to be the first to attack the Persian provinces and that, when the Persians "should become alarmed at his onset and ask the reason for the war he was making, "an answer could be given them that they (the Turks) were demanding (the surrender "of) the artillery, arms and treasure, which the Persians took from Sultan Bayazid, "uncle of Sultan Murad. This would be a good excuse for war then being waged "without further ado. So forthwith he had letters written to all the Pashas in the "provinces that they should set themselves about making warlike raids, and in- "flicting damage on the Persians, and capturing and sacking all the places they "could, until he sent them a general from Constantinople. Immediately the "Sultan looked around for a general, and chose Mustafa Pasha, on whom he enjoined "that he should take measures to march with an army against the enemy in the "direction of Erzerum, in order to seize the district of Shirwan and the provinces "of the Georgians, Christians and friends and confederates of the Persians. He "(the Sultan) also directed Sinan Pasha, one of his Wazirs, to prepare with a force "to make contact with the enemy in the direction of Baghdad."

This was on 17.1.1578.¹

The account in C of the preparations made by the Turks for the ensuing campaign, the numbers and composition of the troops assigned to the various Pashas, the march and penetration into Georgia, which follows, is far too lengthy to be reproduced here in its entirety: some extracts are given, besides an abstract, in order to show the course, result and duration of hostilities.

"On 13.4.1578 the general had embarked on 5 galleys and 2 lighters a number of Jan- "issaries and artillery, ammunition, arquebuses and other armaments, with orders that "these should be disembarked at Trebizond in the Black Sea, as being a place near the "localities where he intended to proceed with all the army. That same day he went to "take leave of his master, accompanied by all the Pashas and principal personages of the "Court of the Sultan, coming into the presence with many ceremonies which on such "occasions they are wont to use: and he (the Sultan) gave him his blessing and bestowed "on him a robe of gold brocade and consigned to him the standard with his commission "as general, and at once gave him leave to depart."

After Mustafa Pasha had remained 20 days at Scutari ordering his troops,

"his master seeing that he was delaying so long in departing decided to cross the strait, "and to go to a palace of his near by, where he had his general, on his coming, divested "of the dress of gold brocade which he was wearing, and a pair of gold embroidered trousers, "called by the Turks 'shalwar', used by them for riding, and he sent him together a jewelled "scimitar and a horse, impressing on him that he must march immediately, inasmuch as "the weather did not admit of his dallying so much. . . . And so on Wednesday, the 5th

¹ The year was then reckoned as beginning in March: i.e. this would be 1579 by modern reckoning, but from the letter of Mustafa Pasha, following, it seems clear that the year really was 1578.

"May, he left Scutari with his whole camp in admirable order: and this he did to display "to his master, who was standing at the window, his great competence." (Some days later) "Mustafa Pasha sent for the Agha of the Bombardiers, and handed over to him "all the artillery which he was taking with him, i.e. about 300 small pieces, and bade him "proceed via Angora to Erzerum, and there join him with the whole army. . . ."

When the commander-in-chief via Konieh and Sivas reached Erzerum, where he found the Pashas of Aleppo, Marash, Karkamish, Karamania and other provinces assembled with contingents, he had to halt for about a month to allow caravans of supplies and specie from distant centres to arrive: and, when they had come, he held a review of all the troops and artillery, causing certain Persian prisoners to be placed on the walls, in order that they might be impressed by the size and armament of the Turkish army. One of these prisoners he set free and, after making him a present, dispatched to the Shah with a letter, which according to this Italian version, was worded:

"Most serene king of Persia. I inform you that I, Mustafa Pasha, the vizir, commander-in-chief of the army of my master, Sultan Murad, the Ottoman emperor, have come here "with a countless host of infantry and 300,000 cavalry and 600 pieces of artillery, 6,000 "Janissaries and arquebusemen to chastise those who have been responsible for the poisoning "of your brother Isma'il, and also to seize the country of the Georgian Christians. But, if "Your Highness should bar my way and try to defend those people, by the instructions of "my master I shall be obliged to fight you also. There is nothing else to be said save that "if a king of Persia, such as you are, should capture a mere slave of the Grand Signor of "the Turks, it will be no honour to him. But, should the contrary happen, it would be "an honour and infinite glory for me throughout the world that such a man as I had "captured a king like you. You will give me an answer to this, and meanwhile I shall "proceed to Shirwan to chastise those people."

This was on the last day of July 1578. On the following day the general and whole force set out for the country of the Georgians, and ten days later penetrated into their borders. The narrative goes on to describe how after the Turkish vanguard had taken one fort by assault, and had subsequently settled down for a rest and sleep, they were attacked and badly handled by Muhammad Khan, a Persian commander until, reinforcements sent to their aid having been furnished with the commander-in-chief's standard, drums and a guard of Janissaries, the Persians were deceived into thinking that the Turkish main body was on them, and withdrew. Large numbers of the heads of Persians killed, and prisoners subsequently decapitated were built up in pillars in order to intimidate the country people. This fight occurred 14.8.1578.

Then the narrative records how Georgian chieftains began to come in and surrender to the Turks and were rewarded, given presents and promised the Sultan's protection. After posting a holding force in that district Mustafa Pasha with the rest of the army set off for Tiflis, and other submissions by Christian Georgians were made on his line of march; but in many places in the woods the Turks were harassed and attacked, and booty seized from their supply columns: and they found Tiflis evacuated, and a bridge across the river leading to the town and to Shirwan broken down. The Turkish general stopped his soldiers from going across and destroying the town; and, when the bridge was repaired, left a garrison and Janissaries and artillery and marched on into Shirwan. The route taken passed through the domain of a Georgian prince called Alexander, 'king of the eastern march', to whom a Turkish envoy was sent and who came in to make his submission. A description of the parade made to impress this prince is given. A few days later Turkish scouts came up to the Persians, and more skirmishing ensued on the banks of a river, where owing to a bridge breaking the Persians lost many men by drowning, had the worst of it, and fled.

Not long afterwards, instigated by some of the Pashas many Turkish soldiers mutinied,

demanding their return rather than cross the river, but finally Mustafa Pasha with the majority of the loyal troops crossed, losing many men by drowning in the swift river: and on 26.11.1578 he went to Tiflis and stayed there four days.

Meanwhile Simon, who, son of the former Georgian ruler in Tiflis, had been a *détenu* in Persia for the previous 17 years, proceeded to make guerilla warfare on the Turkish flanks in the Persian interest, and played havoc.¹ The Turkish commander-in-chief returned to Erzerum, where he arrived 21.12.1578 to make his winter quarters, sending the other Pashas and their forces back to their respective home-centres for the winter: he found awaiting him the Pasha of Anatolia with a large reinforcement sent by the Sultan, who had become anxious at receiving no news of what was happening in the Georgian campaign. On 15.1.1579 dispatches arrived in Erzerum from 'Uthman Pasha, who had been left as commander in Shirwan, reporting the dispatch by Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh of his wife and eldest son with a force and the design of recovering Shirwan, for the Persians had learnt of the withdrawal for the winter of the main Turkish army. At first the Persians won ground, then lost it: the Tatars made common cause with the Turks. Shamakha was taken and sacked, also Ganjeh with much treasure. Hearing of the counter-attack Sultan Murad III wrote to the Tatar ruler, calling on him to go to the aid of 'Uthman Pasha in Tiflis, to invade Persia in revenge. Before the spring came in Erzerum Mustafa Pasha had received instructions from Constantinople to rebuild Kars "which in earlier times had been a town of the Christians and extensive, but is now in ruins".

By June 1579 all the Pashas with their forces were back again in Erzerum: in July Mustafa Pasha set off on his way to relieve Tiflis, arriving on the 10th at Kars, where he camped;

"and having seen the town so destroyed that there were neither walls nor house except for
 "60 [! ! *sic*] Christian churches, the third part of the town surrounded by the river Aras
 ". . . at the end of 28 days he laid walls on the old foundations. They finished three walls
 "and two fosses were dug, one and a demilune and a fort, or small castle, within the town
 "and behind the river bank: and, as there were three hills near the town, about half a mile
 "off, he had a small fort built on each of them, and posted a good guard and 6 pieces of
 "field-artillery in each and two culverins. In the province of Khurasan the King of Persia
 "was engaged in hostilities with his brother Bahram Mirza, and the chief of the Qizil-bash;
 "but he patched up matters with them . . . having learnt that the Turks were building with
 "much energy" (at Kars). "He was unable to believe that the work could be put through
 "so rapidly, and so in order to ascertain the truth he sent to the Turkish general several
 "loads of fruit as a present together with a letter, in which in substance he wrote that he

¹ It was perhaps about that Simeon or Simon that in Arch. Vat., Arm. XLIV, vol. 42, p. 99 (75), there is a Brief, dated 1.4.1598, from Pope Clement VIII to his

"very dear son in Christ Simeon, King of Karthveli and Iberia",

which acknowledged with pleasure a letter sent by Simeon to His Holiness,

"from which We learnt: . . . of your constancy in the Catholic Faith . . . and that, like a Catholic prince, you are
 "stoutly defending it against the Tatars and the Turks . . . that you reverence with pious respect the Holy Roman
 "Church. But We have heard with regret of the death of your father, the king Chirluar Saphi [? *sic*] who, as you
 "write, fell while fighting bravely in battle for the love of Christ the Lord against the savage Tatars . . . With regard
 "to your misfortunes, and that of imprisonment by the Persians, which you mention, We were no little troubled, but give
 "thanks to God who brought you out of prison and confirmed you in your kingdom . . . so that you wage war success-
 "fully for the Lord Himself against His enemies and in particular against the most barbarous Turks . . ."

This Simeon, "king" of Georgia, was presumably father or brother of the wife of Shah 'Abbas I.

According to Fr. du Cerceau's (1740) edition of *Krusinski's Memoirs*, Shah Khudabandeh

"began his reign with the death of three of his brothers, who fled away towards the Turkish frontier, but he allured
 "them to Court by fine promises and then put them to death. Being engaged in a war with the Turks in the very
 "first year of his reign he gave the command of his army to his eldest son, who immediately took from them the town
 "of Van: and gained a great victory over them in 1577" (? *sic* 1578). "He afterwards obtained another more con-
 "siderable victory near Baghdad, where, it is said, the Turks had 70,000 men killed. They lost 80,000 more upon
 "another occasion, when, however, the Persians dearly purchased the victory with the loss of 44,000 men on their side.
 "But they retook the town of Shamakha, which the Turks had lately taken in Shirwan. This happened in 1578."

"had learnt of Mustafa Pasha being there, engaged in rebuilding Kars, but trusted that "the Turkish general would not succeed in this undertaking, because, were the latter to "persevere in it, he" (Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh) "would be bound to prevent him: "in fact, should Mustafa Pasha not desist from such a plan, he (the Shah) would rebuild it "with the heads of Mustafa's Turks laid instead of stones.

"When the Turkish general received this letter, he had 30 Persian prisoners brought into "the presence of himself and the Persian envoy, and the heads of 29 of them struck off: the "one left alive along with these heads he had placed on the ramparts instead of stones, and "then told the ambassador to return to his king, and report all that he had seen, giving "him also two mule-loads to take, one of cannon-balls, the other of arquebuses, and adding "that he was to tell his sovereign that he (Mustafa Pasha) was unable to send any other "present, as his army was not bringing with it any other kind of fruit than these he was "dispatching.

"The ambassador set off and reported everything to his king, who was loth to credit it, "as it seemed to him impossible that in such a short time he (the Turkish commander-in- "chief) could have carried through so immense a piece of building. Desirous of becoming "better enlightened, he (Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh) once more sent off one of his "personages with carpets and fruit as presents for the Turkish general, so that the envoy "might the better investigate and see for himself whether it were true that the town of Kars "was being rebuilt, and how far the construction had proceeded. When that personage "had appeared in the Turkish camp, the General asked him what news he brought, and "he replied that he had been sent by his sovereign to discuss terms of peace with him. On "that the General agreed willingly enough, and spoke nicely to him, and afterwards sent "him with some *chaoushes* inside the new town in order to show him the works, and he was "taken round the ramparts. When he was on a high tower, one of the ambassador's men "was pushed over and precipitated down, and this was done by the General's orders to "frighten the enemy. When the envoy had returned to the tent where he was lodged, "which was near to the castle in the town, the (Turkish) general commanded that at night- "fall on the walls above the castle, and on the forts, and even on the tops of the pavilions, "lights should be hung and flares, and all the artillery fired off in the town and in the "forts and camp, and that the shots should pass over the ambassador's tent, so as to "awe him. . . ."

Later in 1579, in connection with the fighting round Tiflis, Mustafa Pasha summoned the Persian ambassador, told him what had occurred, and in anger had all those with the envoy killed, the ambassador himself imprisoned in the castle at Erzerum.

The prince of the Tatars proceeded to raid Ganjeh, Karabagh, Ardabil and up to near Erivan. However, the Grand Vizir dying that year in Constantinople, Mustafa Pasha was summoned there in consequence of the machinations and accusations of his enemies. In his place Sinan Pasha, who had been Pasha of Baghdad at the opening of hostilities, was nominated commander-in-chief, and proceeded to Erzerum, 8.5.1580: on arrival with the army in Kars, 15.7.1580, he found there an envoy from the Shah of Persia with letters addressed to Mustafa, suggesting terms of peace. These he sent on at once to Constantinople, and then, leaving Kars he marched to Tiflis, which was besieged. He abandoned it and retired on Kars about 8.9.1580. Thence, desirous of "drawing the Persian fire" to discover their plans, he dispatched a woman's dress to the Persian monarch. Leaving a garrison in Kars he then returned to the army at Erzerum, only to learn that the Hungarians had begun to fight the Turks in Europe, while the Sultan was wanting to make an attack on Corfu. Mustafa Pasha, by then Grand Vizir, protested that the Ottoman resources were not equal to fighting on three fronts simultaneously, but died not long afterwards.

When he learnt the position the Persian ambassador burnt the letters he had brought containing Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh's offers in order to secure peace, saying to the Turks that he had been dispatched to learn whether they were prepared to restore the places captured

by Mustafa Pasha in Shirwan and Georgia, etc. Sultan Murad III recommended the Persian envoy to go back to Erzerum and treat with Sinan Pasha as general: the latter, influenced by the personal motive that an enemy of his might be made Grand Vizir, were he away from Constantinople, was of opinion that the captured towns could not be held and had perforce to be relinquished. He quitted Erzerum in March, and arrived in May 1582 at Constantinople, when peace was finally made.

*

*

*

*

*

REIGN OF SHAH 'ABBAS I (c. 1587-1629)

FROM THE signing of this peace there was an interval of three or four years till the death of Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh, which historians have found difficult to date with certainty: and the internal history of Persia during that interval, and indeed for years following it, is particularly obscure. According to the writer of the article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th edition, his reign had been distracted by intestine divisions and rebellion: the Turkish forces "again" (no date stated) invaded Azarbaijan and took Tabriz: Hamzeh Mirza, eldest of the three sons of the Shah,

"upheld his fortunes to the utmost of his power . . . and forced the Turks to make peace "and retire.¹ On the east his *youngest* son, 'Abbas, held possession of Khurasan. Hamzeh "Mirza also reduced rebel chieftains . . . but was stabbed to death by an assassin. . . . "The stories originated (!) by Olearius that Hamzeh Mirza and a *second* son, Isma'il, "each reigned a few months may refer to attempts on the part of the Qizil-bash chiefs to "assert for one or the other a share of the sovereign power, but do not merit particular "consideration.² On the news of the death of Hamzeh Mirza reaching Khurasan, Murshid "Quli Khan, leader of the Ustujulu Qizil-bash, who had made good his claims to the "guardianship of 'Abbas, at once conducted the young prince from that province to Qazwin, "and occupied it. The object was evident, and in accordance with popular feeling. 'Abbas "had been proclaimed king by the nobles at Nishapur some two or three years before this "occurrence",

(i.e. before 1586, the date of Khudabandeh's demise being assumed as 1585!).

On the other hand Fr. Paul Simon of Jesus Mary, the first leader of the Carmelites, who arrived in Persia at the end of 1607 and by his residence at the Court and relations with those in a good position to learn details of what had happened only 20 years previously, stated in his long report after his return to Rome, 1608:³

" . . . The King of Persia is called Shah 'Abbas. He was the *second-born*. Out of fear "of his brother (*when his father was dead*) he fled into Khurasan, where he lived incognito "and poorly, like a Darwish among the Tatars there. Some of the principal lords of "Persia, partial to a change, offered him the kingdom. They caused his brother" (i.e. Hamzeh Mirza, or perhaps Isma'il Mirza) "to be killed by the barber, who cut his "throat while shaving him; and they sent for this king" (i.e. 'Abbas), "who with the aid "of the Tatars subdued many of the provinces which were willing to recognize him. To "those lords, who had made the plot against his brother, he gave the lands and money "which he had promised; then, at a banquet, he asked them whether his brother was a "good king. They replied 'yes'. At once he had all of them decapitated, and he laid in "ruins the district where had been born the barber who murdered him,"

(i.e. Hamzeh Mirza, or perhaps Isma'il Mirza, the other brother of 'Abbas: is meant, seeing that Olearius, in Persia by 1638, relates that Hamzeh was assassinated at the instance of

¹ Sir P. Sykes' *History of Persia* notes that Hamzeh Mirza in an attack in A.D. 1585 killed 20,000 of the enemy: 15 months later he inflicted crushing losses on the Turks, but was assassinated in 995 A.H. (A.D. 1587) by some of his familiars: that in 995 A.H. (1587) a battle was fought near Baghdad, in which Farhad Pasha surprised and defeated a Persian army, 15,000 strong, and the next year took Ganjeh. Turkey tried to lay hands on the provinces of Persian 'Iraq, and of Khuzistan.

² Clearly, Olearius is justified by Fr. Paul Simon, and the assumption of the *Encyclopaedia* writer wrong.

³ O.C.D. 234 b.

Isma'il Mirza, and Isma'il in turn some months later killed by his barber).¹ Be that as it may, there appears to be some ground for concluding that after the death of Shah Muhammad, the father, the throne did not come at once to 'Abbas, but that for months, or a year or more, his elder brother Hamzeh Mirza was in possession of the chief power, 'Abbas himself not in close brotherly support, but an outcast or fugitive in a distant province, a puppet in the hands of tribal chieftains and an ambitious rival, if not a fratricide: and, to judge by his subsequent treatment of his own sons, that would not have been a crime from which he would shrink.

It remains here to add a small contribution by European residents at the Persian Court intimate with the Safawi family to whatever Persian historical research may be inclined to accept as the date of birth of 'Abbas I and, therefore, his age when the disappearance of Hamzeh Mirza left him as second-born the heir to Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh. Recapitulating from the account of Vincenzo degl'Alessandri already quoted, which is dated 1574, regarding the family of Shah Tahmasp I:

"The eldest is named Khudabandeh Mirza, aged about 43 years . . . he has *three* sons, the eldest at the Court and *aged 14 years* of most handsome looks, and high spirit, *"dearly loved by the king . . . except for these he (the king) has no other grandsons by his sons. . . ."*

Hamzeh Mirza would have thus been born in or about 1560-1, according as solar or lunar years are meant, and the month of writing of the report: he would have been some 18 years old when dispatched with troops to recover Shirwan: and some 25 years old, if assassinated after Shah Muhammad's death (which was in 1585 according to Krusinski). 'Abbas Mirza presumably was several years younger: had he been in his teens and nearer in age Alessandri, who has a word about most of the young princes, would have mentioned it.

Fr. John Thaddeus, who knew 'Abbas I intimately for twenty years, in the report in the archives of Propaganda Fide, Rome,² is quite precise: "The king of Persia is 63 lunar years of age, but 60 in solar years", and the secretary of the Congregation submitting the report adds:

"This is what can be said about the king of Persia and his realm, which king, after the departure of the aforesaid Fr. John Thaddeus (1628) is understood to have died in January 1629, aged 63."

Assuming solar years are meant, this would make the birth of 'Abbas Mirza to have been in 1566, and his age as 20 shortly after the death of Muhammad Khudabandeh: whereas, the original report having been written at Isfahan in 1624 when the Shah was 60 solar years of age, that would make him 64 to 65 years old at his death in January 1629. In any case the writer of the article on the history of Persia in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th edition—"at the age of 70, after a reign of 42 years . . . 'Abbas died on the night of 27.1.1628"—was widely beside the mark in the first figure, as that computation would have made 'Abbas born in 1558, and some years older than Hamzeh Mirza!

Once put forward as sovereign 'Abbas I returned to Khurasan with the object of chastising the Uzbek tribesmen who after his departure had made a raid, and seized Harat, where 'Abbas himself had perhaps passed his early years. Arrived at Mashhad he was obliged by news of internal disturbances to go back to Qazwin; and of that return the Uzbek chieftain took advantage to occupy the sacred city of Mashhad itself, and let it be plundered by his tribesmen. Then the young ruler had to hasten south to Shiraz to quell an outbreak in Fars: and that was followed by the menace of a Turkish attack from Mesopotamia into western

¹ Yet another account (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed., under heading "Shah 'Abbas") gives this version: "'Abbas was the youngest son of Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh. After heading a successful rebellion against his father and causing one of his brothers (or, as some say, both) to be assassinated, he obtained possession of the throne in 1585. . . . He first attacked the Uzbaks and defeated them near Herat in 1597."

² S.R., vol. 209, p. 240 *et seq.*

Persia. Warfare had already been ablaze in Georgia. In 1590, unfavourable for Persia, peace was made, Tabriz and some Caspian ports remaining with the Turks: and that frequent bone of contention, the cursing of the Khalif 'Umar by the Persian Shiah, was dragged in by the offended Turks insisting on cessation of the practice. Already as early in his reign as 1592 the prowess of the young 'Abbas I as a warrior and successful fighter against the Turks had reached Rome, for on 30.9.1592 Pope Clement VIII wrote a Brief (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLIV, vol. 38, p. 54), and invited the Persian monarch to join a Christian league against the Sultan of the Turks, against whom the Pope fulminated a tremendous denunciation. The translation runs:

"Pope Clement VIII to the illustrious 'Abbas, the most puissant king of the Persians, greeting and the light of the spirit of truth.

"In so lofty and renowned a position is Your fame installed, and so great is Your glory gained by many and very important achievements that, though there is no mutual acquaintance, yet We are led by the very widespread reputation You have to desire for You everything, and to yearn for the bringing low and crushing of the unbearable pride of the tyrant of the Turks, a man the foulest of all and the enemy as much Ours as Yours and that of all good men. For just as virtue in even absent men wins for themselves good wishes, so do their vices antagonize. Now, what are the vices of that fellow? the height of cruelty and of avarice and of rapaciousness, and an insatiable lust of gaining everything by doing harm of the worst kind: no regard for his oath and no keeping faith. Whom has he not harried? whom has he not provoked or from whom has he not ravished lands, cities, provinces? How many injuries has he caused us; on the Arabs, Greeks, Germans, Pannonians, Italians how many slaughters has he inflicted? The cozenings and oath-breakings, whereby he has grown, are well known, as it is by these and not by fair wars and proper victories that he has waxed strong. Armistices and treaties even, if it seem good, he makes with his neighbours whom he gathers are able to harm him; when he has tied their hands by this trick, then against one of them, in regard to whom he thinks it will be the most convenient, contrary to his engagement, contrary to the oath, he begins a war, though in no way injured; meanwhile the rest stay peaceful remembering their pledged word and the oath that he has always thought fit to be despised. So aggrandized by the wealth and spoil taken from each separate people he attacks the rest with an ever stronger hand till he annihilates one and all.

"He is straining every nerve now to make us his sport by the same wiles, but We think they are not hid from Your prudence.

"So We have thought that plans should also be shared in the common cause and resources collected to crush that plague spot. We, however, think this can be done in the opposite way to that by which he deals with the rest: he attacks them one by one: now it behoves each and every one to attack him. Let us at this juncture combine in the handling of this business, and so let us make a league with the rest of the princes of Christendom and attack him with joint forces and arms.

"But there is great need for You also personally to assail him on Your quarter. Now, as he is said to be very much stronger than You in engines of war and of fire and in a very inflammable material, which retains its heat very persistently and acts most violently in setting on fire everything else, whereof You yourselves lack artificers (since Persian nobility would never yield in valour and arms to chattels of the vilest description), We shall not suffer You to be inferior in these devices.

"You know that with regard to these matters and the dispatch of artificers of these things there has been much negotiation in Your name with previous Pontiffs, in which, if there was then no means of satisfying You, at least goodwill was never wanting. Now, therefore, if while our energies are bent on war You also decree to start and carry on war in your quarter, We shall seek artificers and send them. Now victory will be most certain, first if God, from Whom all good things are, take vengeance on the crimes of

"that fellow, and if such huge armies attack that monster from all sides. For, if very recently, while you stayed quiet, he has been all the same defeated at the Echinades by the prowess of the Christians, only some few torn and half-shattered ships escaping to tell of so great a disaster and his mighty fleet sunk, fired, beaten, annihilated, what is now to happen to him, ringed round both by Christian princes and by Your own might and arms? What place in which to halt, or to which to flee, and what hope is left him?"

"We desired to open out to You this plan of Ours, and to exhort You to be willing to use such a great chance as this. May the blessed God both in this matter and in all Your thoughts and emprises indicate what is supremely true and what advances Your interests and Your kingdom's safety and dignity.

"We have willed that this letter should be done in duplicate, and with that second copy shall send You a trusty man who on arrival will both give You that second copy and explain some points at Our bidding. We desire his words to be believed by You. Given at Tusculum on the last day of September 1592, in the first year (of Our Pontificate)."

In 1597 operations were reopened against the Uzbaks on the east, with the recovery of Harat and the province of Khurasan resulting: in the south the semi-independent Khan of Lar was subjugated, though not by 'Abbas in person. Hostilities with Turkey recommenced in earnest in 1601, when the qualities of 'Abbas I as a military leader and organizer of conquest and extension of territory, his most merited title to renown, began to manifest themselves: for, one after another, he recovered the provinces on its western borders lost by Persia in preceding reigns, Shirwan, that touchstone of Turco-Persian enmity, being one of the first. In the preliminary audience which he gave the Carmelites, 3.1.1608, he claimed that he had persevered at war with the Turks for 10 years continuously, i.e. from 1598.

* * * *

* * *

* *

From this chronological point contact between Persia and Europe was joined far more consistently than ever in the past: and it was precisely the venom of 'Abbas I against the Turks, his tenacious purpose to have them beaten to the ground, which made him turn his attention to Europe as a means of attaining his end: just as the Popes in past crises had bethought themselves of the utility of co-operation from and by Persia in order to pierce and throttle Turkish might, so 'Abbas needed someone to create a serious diversion in European or in Anatolian Turkey, in order that he might sweep over into Mikrasia, as Timur the Lame had done before him. Further, his soldiers, trained enough in their own style of tactics, lacked the artillery in which the Turks always hitherto had been superior and owing to which frequently the victors: he wanted field-pieces and gunners to be supplied by the allies he hoped to obtain.

First, and fortuitously, enter the Sherley¹ brothers on the scene as possible "liaison officers" to achieve the co-operation desired: and, with so much already written on the subject, an apology to the reader is almost needed for relating the circumstances of their coming, and their proceedings as recorded by various direct and indirect correspondents of the Papal chancery in Rome. However far right or wrong it may be, the account produced by the Portuguese traveller in Persia da Costa (himself a delegate from Rome, as will subsequently be explained) reads:²

"Anthony Sherley was the second son of Thomas Sherley, a knight of the county of Sussex and treasurer of the Queen, and of a mother attached to the Catholic religion. He was a favourite with the Earl of Essex, under whom he served in the wars in France,

¹ So Robert spelt his name in his letters to the Pope.

² Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20.

"1590-1, receiving in recognition of his work from Henri Quatre a knighthood of S. Michael. On his return to England he wore this order on his breast, in resentment of which Queen Elizabeth had him imprisoned: his wife lost her reason and died out of chagrin. When released Sir Anthony went to serve the Queen in the war in Holland, where he bore himself bravely, but was captured by the Spaniards in the time of the Duke of Parma, and put into prison at Brussels, being released on payment of a ransom.

"Then he began to roam the seas with several ships, and in the year 1595 left with seven ships for the Indies, seized a certain port, but obtained little money from it. So much of his father's money had he spent in the Dutch wars and through this expedition that Sir Thomas the elder became bankrupt and the Queen put him in prison, where he still is, while the exchequer has seized his property. . . ."

[" . . . ¹When the disturbances over Ferrara occurred, these two brothers" (i.e. Sir Anthony, and Robert, the youngest) "were dispatched by Elizabeth, queen of England, to the Duke of Ferrara and other potentates in Italy, to exhort them not to let Ferrara go to His Holiness, and to promise them help in money and soldiers" (that was in 1598). "Don Robert, who is the younger, went with the ambassador to one of the Italian potentates, from whom he received the reply that it was too late, because Ferrara had already surrendered. Then they tried other machinations, in order to set Italy in arms, especially in the kingdom of Naples. . . ."]

Da Costa's narrative stated: ". . . He found things already settled in Ferrara, and passed on to Constantinople, and thence to Persia. The knight is of great spirit" ("a man of much judgment, and a good soldier"—says the other account quoted under (¹)) "and courageous in the field. His father and elder brother are heretics, but he has always behaved with moderation and indifference in this respect: it is believed that he became a Catholic at Venice in 1598."

Another source—a report of 1609—tells something of what happened after the arrival of the two brothers:

"Don Robert Sherley, the Englishman whom the king of Persia is today sending as ambassador to Your Holiness, arrived in Persia together with Don Anthony his brother in merchants' garb, *exactly at the time when the king was wanting to send ambassadors* to the Christian princes, and to have them accompanied by persons acquainted with the ways, so that they should not go astray, as had already happened two years before their arrival" (i.e. in 1597) "to one sent via the East Indies, and of whom no more news was ever heard. When they arrived in Persia they went to Qazwin, the royal capital, with a following of 20 persons, Armenians and others, using the styles of Christian princes and relatives of the Queen of England. The king sent a large company of people on horseback to meet them 3 miles outside the town, and received them in the town with marks of favour. . . . *At the end of a month after their arrival* the king of Persia dispatched as ambassador to Clement VIII Don Anthony together with Husain Ali Baig, a Persian, and he stayed there."

From the other account² more of the story can be pieced together:

"After some months had passed Don Anthony persuaded the king to send him as his ambassador to him (the Pope) and to the Christian kings, promising that he would contrive with them for arms to be taken up against the Turks. He ('Abbas) sent him with another, a Persian, but the Englishman was the senior. He (Anthony Sherley) promised him ('Abbas) to return, and left behind his younger brother, Robert, as a

¹ Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, p. 181.

² Fondo Borghese, *Avvisi di diverse parti del mondo*, 1607-10, Ser. IV, 52, p. 346.

"hostage, promising to send the latter funds from Muscovy. When he left, the king ('Abbas) "gave him presents for himself and for the Christian princes. He took with him "an Augustinian Father, Nicolò de Mello, who was returning to Rome from the West "Indies, where he had been Provincial. This Father and Don Anthony had been great "friends in Persia: in Muscovy the Englishman had words with the Persian ambassador "and with the Father, and later worked on the Grand Duke and had the Father detained "in Muscovy, and so he was banished to a monastery on the White Sea. I do not know "the reason, except that Robert, brother of Don Anthony, said that the reason had been "that the Father had been scheming to do the like to his brother."¹

The approximate date of Sir Anthony's departure from Qazwin, after his brief stay in Persia, can be fixed by the account of Fr. Francisco da Costa,² who arrived in Isfahan, 12.7.1599:

"Don Anthony Sherley had left Isfahan two months before my arrival," i.e. in May 1599. The arrival of the brothers must therefore have been about March or April of that year.

On 8.1.1601 the Papal Nuncio in Prague, where the Emperor was then residing, wrote to the Cardinal of S. George (Card. Cinthius Aldobrandini):³

"His Eminence Cardinal Dietrichstein and the Lord Maximilian, his brother, as well "as the delegates from Transylvania and the Persian ambassador have still not had their "audiences. After having waited for it many days the Cardinal has lately decided to go "out of doors.⁴ The proposals, which he presented to his Majesty (the Emperor) in the "name of his king, were afterwards sent to me by the Persian ambassador himself: and, "as through another channel I had obtained the reply given to the latter, as well as (a "copy or translation of) a *Privilege*,⁵ which the king in question (Shah 'Abbas) is granting "to the Christian merchants, together with the free practice of their religion and of trade "in his realms, I am forwarding to Your Eminence a copy of the whole. . . ."

Attached to the "Copy of the Commission given by the king of Persia to his ambassador, Anthony Sherley"⁶ were:

"Certain General Terms with regard to which the king of Persia has ordered that they "should be negotiated with his Majesty the Emperor and the Christian Princes by his

¹ As a light on the accusations against Sherley in respect of this priest—in Fr. A. de Govea's story quoted by Sir A. T. Wilson in his *Early Spanish and Portuguese Travellers in Persia*, 1925—see the letter of Fr. Paul Simon (O.C.D. 234 b., who had been in Moscow some 6 years later) Fr. Nicolas de Mello

" . . . had lent certain monies to Don Anthony the Englishman, and, as they were due to separate in this city of Moscow, "he to go on by sea, the other via Poland into Italy, the Father asked him for them (back). Whether for this or some "other reason I know not, but Don Anthony accused him to Boris of being a traitor and spy. So they looted him, and "put him away into the Solovievskii monastery on the frozen sea, where he still is according to a report of the Father in "question" (de Mello) "which he dispatched to a prince Gustave, a great favourite with Boris and known to him (de "Mello). The Muscovites took from him (Fr. de Mello) in jewels and money 60,000 dinars. . . . He (Anthony "Sherley) encountered great difficulties in Muscovy, and the Grand Duke was thinking of arresting and detaining "him. . . ."

And, as to Fr. A. de Govea's statement, quoted by Sir A. Wilson (p. 27 of his monograph) " . . . Sherley . . . denounced Friar Nicolas to the Ruthenian priests, with the result that he was imprisoned for 10 years, finally meeting with a martyr's death at the stake," see *En Persia* of Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus, p. 78, where Fr. Nicolas, the Portuguese Augustinian, was alive and in Astrakhan in October 1611, more than 11 years after Sir A. Sherley's journey, since on 12.10.1611 he there delivered and signed his testimony, quoted at length, regarding ill-treatment by the governor of Astrakhan of Fr. John Thaddeus, the Carmelite envoy from the Shah. On the other hand, among the writings and literary works of Fr. John Thaddeus a biography of him by the learned archivist of the Order, Fr. Ambrose of S. Theresia, in *Hierarchia Carmelitana*, fasc. I (Rome 1934) quotes De Villiers, Bibl. Carm. II, 120 as attributing to Fr. John Thaddeus another work: *Relatio martyri Nicolai de Mello, sacerdot. et Nicolai Japponi, Ord. Er. S. Aug.* but does not say where it is—which would appear to indicate that Fr. de Mello was ultimately put to death.

² Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, p. 178.

³ Secr. Arch. Vat.: *Lettere di Principi*, No. 54 (1596-1605).

⁴ This feature of embassies in the 16th-17th centuries may be noted elsewhere in the narratives. It seems to have been contrary to diplomatic etiquette for an envoy to leave the premises, where he was lodged on arrival, until he had had his first audience of the sovereign.

⁵ *Lettere di Principi e Titolati* (1596-1605), No. 54, p. 147.

⁶ *Idem*, p. 141.

“ambassador, Sir Anthony Sherley, knight of England, as far as concerns the war against the Turks.”

“*Firstly*, the king of Persia offers his friendship and goodwill to all the Christian princes, as being most worthy of the same by their merits and valour, the king being singularly moved to this present friendship both by liking for their countries and subjects, and also by hatred for the common enemy, the Turk,

“2. Against whom the king would at present begin to wage war, if only he would be assured that all the burden of the war shall not fall on his shoulders.

“3. In guarantee of that his Majesty with the greatest earnestness requests that all the princes, potentates and republics of Europe, of whatever nature or kind they may be, throughout Christendom shall agree to denounce all treaties and pacts which they may have with the Turks, or—should they not be in a position to enter with all their energy into a wholehearted undertaking—that at least they will remain spectators and covert supporters until the successful issue of this war.

“4. But, as no state can be so perfectly constituted of itself as not to have need of external aid from elsewhere in respect of certain urgent and pressing requirements, or of some supplies which it may require—it is notorious and very manifest to Your Majesty that certain private merchants, under colour and pretext of some pact which they have with the Turks, supply him with funds, by which evidently not only the Turkish Government are furnished and financed in bulk, but also with all kinds of munitions of war required by them, by sea and by land, in addition to constant communications and secret intrigues which are highly prejudicial to all states in Christendom. The king of Persia therefore calls on all together to agree to extinguish and suppress all such harmful pacts and agreements.

“5. And, seeing that the dissensions between the Christian princes have in some sort aided the aggrandizement of the Turkish Empire, the king of Persia with all goodwill and loyal regard requests of them that they will be pleased, each of them severally, to listen and give ear to his salutary exhortation to them once more to combine together closely in a sincere and firm pact to this end, so that ultimately an opportunity should not be provided for the total ruination of their countries and states.

“6. And so, should it please the Christian princes to enter in reality into this contract, his Majesty (of Persia), being himself most resolute in it, urges that they should agree to persuade his most sacred Majesty the Emperor most graciously to deign to declare himself in this matter.

“7. The king of Persia promises that upon the first steps for any agreement and decision being taken in this connection, he will put into the field without any delay 60,000 musketeers and as many mounted men, and even a larger force whenever they should wish it.

“8. Defensive wars being insooth naught else than a loss of time, a useless destruction of men, a loss of funds and reputation, and solely a sign and evidence of weakness and small strength on the part of all countries which adopt them,

“9. And, because, if their overthrow be determined, such a great extension of the tyrannical empire of the Turks must be barred and blocked from various directions, the king of Persia requests and begs once more all the Christian princes to be so good as to decide on *other* places for making war the more ardently on the Turks, and on other fronts than that of Hungary.

“10. On this condition the king promises that, at the first intimation given him by letters and notices containing confirmation by the Emperor and the Confederate Princes of his requests, he will speedily attack the Turks, moreover to this end desiring an ambassador with a very wide commission and plenary authority, principally from his most sacred Majesty the Emperor, and similarly too from the Confederate Princes,

"so that all the better provision be made in every way against all the changes and incidents which every operation of war daily necessitates.

"11. Further, his Majesty asks for a reciprocal and mutual undertaking that nothing be done nor executed without the general consent of all, or of most of the Confederates.

"12. Next, inasmuch as many occasions occur and events happen which do not admit of a delay (sufficient) for sending representatives, or consultation between representatives of countries so distant from each other, in order to obviate such and similar inconveniences his Majesty (i.e. 'Abbas) deems it very useful and needful that such an ambassador with full instructions and orders from his most sacred Majesty the Emperor, and other confederate princes (as has been said above) should be resident at his own Court" (i.e. Isfahan).

"13. Should the Christian princes and potentates be willing to agree to the confederation with his Majesty of Persia, it will not be legitimate for any of those participating to abandon general hostilities against the Turks, whether by an armistice or some terms of truce or some peace direct, and against the assent of all.

"14. Should the Christian princes in general, or the greater part of them, know of any just cause for retiring from (participation in) the war in question, it should be by means of a truce (as stated above): for any final peace they shall be held and obliged to include in it all, or as many Confederates as desire to be included, following the promise of the king (of Persia).

"15. And to give the more credit and weight to his true and genuine intentions *the king opens all his country freely to all kinds of Christians, so that they may enter it, stay and remain there, and depart thence in all security and with every safeguard, giving them besides the most ample privileges both in regard to their persons and their property, trade and affairs. With this he will grant them in the matter of their religion every liberty for choosing places already founded, or to found others, for the exercise of their religion both in public and private, according as it may please them, without any hindrance or molestation or annoyance whatsoever.*

"16. And in order that this Confederacy be the more closely bound together, the said king orders all his Christian subjects whether in Armenia or elsewhere throughout his realm to recognize and submit to the Universal Church, as do all other Christians.

"17. And, as the king of Persia in all that has been said above pledges not only his own person but even his own son for the faithful prosecution of this agreement and friendship with all the Christian princes, and wants to persevere in the same whether in time of war or that of peace respectively, no Confederacy can be concluded without express statements of the plans, and clear demands, intentions and interests on every side, notwithstanding his own desire and resolution. . . . To that end the said king has granted his commission and letters of credence sealed, and authenticated under his great seal.

"18. Lastly, for ampler confirmation on all sides, his Majesty asks for an ambassador from them (to be sent) with the terms and disclosure of their plans, just as by these presents he sends his ambassador accompanied by his (terms and plans)."

By comparing it with the style and language of the Persian documents reproduced and translated later in this work any reader for himself—it does not require an orientalist—can conclude that this remarkable offer for joint military action was couched not in the terms of 'Abbas I, but in those of Sherley: and, when one ponders the wide licence promised for the Christian religion—even more so, the voluntary suggestion to compel submission of all Oriental schismatics, Armenian and Chaldaean, etc., to the Roman obedience (especially in the light of subsequent events)—it is to be sceptical as to how far 'Abbas I personally knew of, realized and approved the implications of the wording as communicated to the Emperor: in brief, how much of these "articles" were the creation of Sherley, irresponsible and free-lance, how much endorsed and intended by 'Abbas I.

As a conception his plan was grandiose, unique for Christendom. When previously in the

almost millenary struggle of the Cross against the Crescent had the Christian hosts been assured of support in the rear of the enemy, on a front of hundreds of miles, by a tried military machine with a technique in oriental warfare that had often defeated Turkish generals, been assured of an ally burning with potent incentive, divergences of creed hopelessly embittered by century-long bloodshed and ill-will?

At that juncture internally the Ottoman empire was weakened by revolts and disorganized. With the pincers pressed firmly and long enough—with another naval force such as had won Lepanto penetrating the straits up to the Golden Horn, with Poland and the Empire pressing down through the Balkans to the gates of Byzantium and then onward across the Bosphorus, with columns from France and Spain landed on the coasts of Syria and Palestine, while the other arm came sweeping over the plains from the east as Timur the Lame had done with his horde—the Ottoman empire might well have collapsed within a few years, the bulk of the Turks have been driven and pushed back over the Russian steppes and Transcaucasia into central Asia. The pity of it was that in 1600 there were no King John Sobieski, nor Prince Eugene, nor Emperor Henry, nor Louis IX to ignore the internal troubles of their own countries, and march for a Cause. Rudolph II was not the man to inspire and lead Europe to the ridding it of the menace of the past centuries: he let his local situation take his attention: perhaps too he did not grasp of what 'Abbas I, properly helped with artillery and gunners, would have been capable as a general in the field. His reply to the *Articles* presented by Anthony Sherley, dated Prague 11.12.1600 and addressed "*Persarum Regis legatis Domino Antonio Syherli anglo eique adiuncto Cuscinali Bego exhibitum*" is not given here, but it can be read in *Lettere di Principi e Titolati*, No. 54 (1596–1605), Secr. Arch. Vat., p. 148.

The "Privilege", or charter, mentioned in the letter from the Nuncio at Prague cited above as having been produced by Anthony Sherley and Husain Ali Baig, in the version in Italian forwarded by the Nuncio to the Vatican runs, translated:¹

"Charter by the most puissant Shah 'Abbas. "Grand Sufi" of Persia.

"We, the great king, whose empire extends to the four cardinal points of the world, "whose word can be broken by no force nor power, neither by Ourselves, nor by Our "son, nor yet by Our successors, Declare by these presents that Our mind, will and pleasure "is this that our realms, dominions and provinces from henceforth be open to all Christians, "and that they be in all liberty to choose places already founded, or to found in them "others, for the exercise of their religion, whether in public or private, according as it may "seem good to them, in any place, in such wise that none of Our (subjects) of whatever "condition dare to cause them the least trouble or hindrance of any sort. And, because "of the friendship which We have now to establish and maintain with the Christian princes, "We extend and grant by these patents to all Christian merchants and other (Christians) "of whatever degree permission to frequent and trade within, and in every part of, Our "realms, dominions and territories without risk or hindrance, or harm whatsoever, more- "over without being charged or mulcted by any of Our officials, ministers, governors of "whatever rank and condition these may be—nay, any effects they may have are to be so "privileged that no one of whatever dignity and superiority or authority shall have per- "mission to pursue or arrest them for the sake of the convenience of Our person, even to "the extent of one 'aspro' (groat).

"With all this, no one of Our religion, of whatever degree he may be, is to be so bold as "to cause them any annoyance by deeds or words, or gesture or signs whatever in religious "matters. Our police too will not take on itself impertinently to lay hands on the persons "and property of these (Christians) for any cause or act, whatever it may be.

"Should perchance some Christian merchant die (in Our realms) it shall be permitted "to no one to touch anything belonging to the said deceased. But, should that dead man "have any associate or partners, the associate or partners shall be empowered to take "entire possession of all the goods left. And, if perchance the defunct shall have been alone,

¹ *Lettere di Principi e Titolati*, No. 54, p. 147, Secr. Arch. Vat.

"the governor of the place or whoever else shall have been desired by the merchant in his illness, is held responsible for the restitution of all property he (the deceased) had to anyone of the same nation to be found in Our provinces.

"Should it have happened, on the other hand, that this merchant should die suddenly without leaving behind him any heir, companion or servant whatsoever, so that the wishes of the deceased remain unknown, the governor of the place shall send those effects to the nearest place without Our borders where there is to be found any other merchant of the same nationality. And those who in Our realms, dominions and territories keep the Customs and tax-posts We prohibit expressly from taking anything from, or from meddling with and pursuing any merchant or other Christian, of whatever condition.

"For the rest, should any Christian give a loan to anyone of Our subjects of whatever condition or rank they may be, by these patents of Ours he or they shall have the right to have recourse to any governor or officer of justice, who shall be immediately obliged to obtain for them without any delay the payment with due satisfaction, but without taking from him or them any gift or remuneration, so that the prosecutors may be indemnified without any trouble. For Our decision and will is expressly such that all Christians be treated throughout Our realms and country with all kindness and gentleness, to their entire satisfaction, and without anyone henceforward presuming to impede them, or annoy them, or demand anything from them. And, notwithstanding that it be a custom in Our realm ordinarily observed and till now inviolably maintained that all Our patents or grants are renewed from year to year, still it is Our will that the present (order) remain in force with full effect evermore, without any infringement or alteration."

Here again it is to be regretted that a Persian version (if it ever existed) is not extant: for this document of 1599, if genuinely representing the terms authorized by 'Abbas I, contains—unilaterally and voluntarily offers, in fact—the rudiments and the kernel of the future régime of extra-territorial jurisdiction¹ in later times admitted in treaties with foreign governments in respect of the immunity from pursuit by local courts, recovery of debts from local citizens, estates of deceased persons promised, a jurisdiction which was unilaterally denounced and withheld in 1928: while, on the other hand, such lavish privileges and sweeping provisions to the detriment of his own vassals raise justifiable doubts as to the substance of the Italian document having emanated from the Shah.

Evidently relations between Anthony Sherley and his Persian colleague were strained before their arrival in Prague. The former's brother, Robert, in a written representation of 1609² used the words:

"the king dispatched his ambassadors to urge His Holiness, the late Clement VIII, viz. Anthony Sherley, my brother, together with Husain 'Ali Baig, a Persian: and later he sent 'Ali Quli Muhrdar, also a Persian, to the late Paul V; and later me, too, Robert Sherley, each of us separately, so that disputes over precedence might not arise, as they did at that time between my brother and Husain 'Ali Baig."

There is a complaint, signed by Sir Anthony Sherley himself, about this quarrel on record in Rome, and in it he refers to his Persian colleague:

". . . but it having been put into his" (Husain 'Ali Baig's) "head that he can succeed in any claim he likes to make against me who am an Englishman, that is to say of a nation deservedly suspect to Your Holiness. . . ."³

¹ Technically, in international law and practice, the expression "Capitulatory" régime, or régime of "Capitulations" is not correct in the case of Persia, where it was not used in the specific treaties signed on the subject: it is alone applicable and admissible to the conditions that formerly existed in Turkey.

² Misc. Arm. II, 157.

³ Fondo Borghese, Ser. III, n. 107, p. 192.

But more serious than the disputes between them had been a matter on which they were apparently united—the proposals they were bringing to the Emperor and other princes of Christendom had been divulged, and openly bruited at the Imperial Court before their arrival. So Sir Anthony and Husain 'Ali Baig had made a joint protest to the Emperor:¹

“The reply that 6 months previous to their arrival there had been talk about the terms ‘of their mission having been given to the complaints made by the ambassadors from ‘Persia over the divulging of the answer, the ambassadors made rejoinder:

“ . . . 5. That the king of Persia has sent to offer his friendship, and receive in “return that of the Christian princes.

“6. That in Turkey the king of Persia has an incalculable number of merchants “and in Constantinople an Agent.

“7. This disclosure of his treaty will afford an opportunity to the Turks to seize “their goods and persons.

“8. That the king of Persia, betrayed in his trust in the Christians, out of spite “will be obliged to seek peace and in the interest of his subjects,

“9. And not only to make peace, but to avenge himself on the Christians, who have “treated him so very evilly in this fashion.

“10. The lands of the king of Spain are near him” (i.e. Shah 'Abbas—doubtless Hurmuz, Masqat, etc., are meant).

“11. This deed” (i.e. the disclosure of the matter of their mission) “is therefore a “misfeasance to princes in general.

“12. And in particular most risky for the king of Spain,

“13. It is contrary to the Imperial dignity, and

“15. Contrary to the etiquette ordinarily observed in all negotiations.

“16. And, finally, they inquired . . . why, if for so long a time their arrival had “been known and the object of it, they” (the Christian princes) “had not got ready “their decision, in part or on all points.” !!

From Prague to Rome, turning from the Emperor to the Sovereign Pontiff, Clement VIII, offering on dull markets the proffered military co-operation of the autocrat of Persia came in the spring of 1601 Sir Anthony Sherley with his “Instructions” of which a copy is on record,²

“Holy Father. The negotiations on behalf of the king of Persia are confined in all to “two heads—the one touching affairs of state, that is a Confederation with the Christian

¹ *Lettere di Principi* (1596–1605), No. 54, p. 136.

² Fondo Borghese, *Avvisi di Diversi Parti del Mondo*, 1607–10, Ser. IV, n. 52, p. 334. This document is inserted at this particular chronological point solely because it is headed.

“Istruzione a Don Antonio Sirlei Inglese, uno degl'ambasci del Re di Persia a Papa Clemente VIII.”

But (a) it occurs in a volume of Fondo Borghese Ser. IV, n. 52, which is indexed as *Avvisi di diverse parti del mondo*, 1607–10, i.e. later than Anthony Sherley's embassy of 1600–1, and precisely covers the year 1609 of Robert Sherley's first mission; and (b) there exists in Fondo Chigi II, 48, p. 327 a “Memoriale dato alla Santità di N^{ro} Signore Papa Paolo V da Don Roberto Sirlei, ambasciatore del Rè di Persia,” whole sentences and phrases of which are identical with those of the “Instructions” said to be Anthony Sherley's, and in this occur the words:

“ . . . the king dispatched . . . as his ambassadors to Pope Clement VIII Anthony Sherley my brother . . . and “afterwards to Your Holiness . . . me, too, Robert Sherley. . . .”

thus forcing the reader to the conclusion that the attribution of the first document to Anthony Sherley and Pope Clement's time has been mistakenly done by some copyist or index-writer, and that both this document and (b), which is longer and differs in parts, belong to 1609 and Robert Sherley's first mission and visit to Rome. The confusion is, however, complicated by yet another version in Misc. Arm. II, 151, headed.

“Relatione fatta dal Conte Sirlei Inglese ambasci del Rè di Persia alla Stà di Nostro Signore Papa Greg XV nel mese “d'Agosto 1622 intorno la lega che si tratta di fare col detto Rè et Principi Xriani, et il modo di poter ottenere la vittoria “con il Turco comune Nemico,”

professing to be Sherley's representations of 1622 to Pope Gregory XV: yet the wording is identical with that of (b) of 1609 to Pope Paul V. It is a fact that Robert Sherley was again in Italy in that year; but in 1622 there was no point in Shah 'Abbas seeking an alliance with the King of Spain, with whom he was at war over Hurmuz, against the Turks, whom he was not then fighting, nor likelihood of his making offers about the oriental Christians, whom he was persecuting.

"princes through the intermediary of Your Holiness against the common enemy, the Turk, the other concerning matters of Religion: and, although the second may be the more important business, and the greater object of consideration for Your Holiness, and the more desired by me too as a Christian, still, because with the king of Persia the other has been perhaps the stronger motive in inducing him to do this, so with the permission of Your Holiness I shall begin with

"The business of the Confederacy.

"Your Holiness will already know of the great and ancient enmity between the two puissant monarchies of Persia and Turkey, and of what import it is to Christendom that that of the Turks should be brought low, as being the nearer and stronger:

"Discouring with the king of Persia on these matters, and finding him a valiant prince, a sagacious warrior, desirous of humbling the Turk, and moreover well affected to the Christian people, I began to encourage him in this design: and, somewhat of a soldier myself, I proposed to him various plans, by which he could the better bring his desires to fruition, and, in order to get the more into his confidence, the more intimate with him, I also showed him various secrets of fortification and devices of our military training.

"3. Among other points I impressed on him what great importance friendship and alliance with the Christian princes would have for him, and explained to him their great strength, their constancy in whatever they have resolved, and their knowledge of the art of war, saying that by way of Hungary and by acting on the defensive a prince was inflicting as much harm on them" (the Turks) "as all ours together, at least the chief ones together with the Persian forces as well.

"4. When he ('Abbas I) then asked me how this union might be effected, I answered him that no intermediary would be so powerful as that of seeking to win over Your Holiness, as head of all the princes, and that, to move Your Holiness to do that, no method would be so effective as that of showing favour to the Christians, and granting them those privileges which are discussed under heading No. 2 of this negotiation.

"5. Then, as to this Confederacy, Holy Father, the point principally to be considered consists in knowing how it can be brought about or effected."

The main points are these:

"Firstly, that there should be friendship and correspondence between the Christian nations and the people in Persia, so that in all matters business may be transacted with more familiarity than hitherto.

"Secondly, that Your Holiness and the other princes shall have your agents and ambassadors at that Court (Isfahan), and also the king of Persia his at Your Court and the Courts of the other princes who join the Confederacy.

"Thirdly, that it be a reciprocal Confederacy in war against the Turks, both an offensive war, if this can be managed, and a defensive war, because the greater harm would be caused to the common enemy in this way. As to a defensive war, it does not please the king of Persia that this only should be waged by the Christian princes against the Turks; but he would prefer the offensive, if it can be managed, and with this objective the king of Persia would desire that all ties and agreements of the Christian princes with the Turks be broken, as far as can be done. Defensive warfare being risky for the defenders, besides the waste of time, men, money and reputation, while the enemy's discipline and military skill increase. . . .

"8. Of an offensive war I shall say that just as it brings with it great fame, so it also brings alarm and peril to the enemy, seeing that it penetrates the more his defects and discovers the weaknesses, which this defensive masked; and that these weaknesses be far greater in the empire of the Turk than is thought can be understood in many ways, such as the following:

"9. All the flower of his armies he is posting in Hungary for a parade (of force) and intimidation, having no other occasion at present to employ them elsewhere, and these troops are more showy than efficient. The interior of his realm is without soldiers,

"fortresses, munitions, or any other practical means of defence, as will be gathered when particular places are discussed.

"10. Besides this, the government is corrupt, disorganized and tyrannical: places as judges, and governorships sold to unmanageable and incapable men: the people burdened and discontented everywhere. Very large numbers are daily escaping into the Kingdom of Persia: revolts are frequent and serious, like that of the Syrians, which routed Hasan Pasha with 60,000 men, that of the leader of the Arabs of the desert, and that of the Christians of Mount Lebanon, that of the chief of the Arabs of Jizair [*? sic*]: all that within four years, and other greater disturbances by which they are much weakened.

"11. As to the time and place for war to be waged, the king of Persia would not wish to propose anything definite, not knowing what would be convenient to, or the plans of, the Christian princes. Everything indicates that Syria or Palestine would be very suitable, both for the easiness of the enterprise and transport of troops, as well as for it bringing the war near to parts where he (the king of Persia) could lend his aid, although, should he be unable to do this, he will not fail to make a very strong diversion.

"*Second Heading—Regarding the Christian Religion.*

"1. Out of regard for the (objects of the) first heading, the king of Persia has been induced to negotiate about this and without repugnance, being courteous and kindly by nature towards Christians, and of his own accord inclined to favour them, especially since he has taken to wife a Christian, daughter of Simon Khan, of the Georgian kings. For this reason many of the chief men at his Court are Christians or well-disposed to Christians, e.g. the general of his army, Allah Viridi, and many others.

"2. This propensity is stimulated also by the fact that the Muhammadan law of the Persians according to the theory and interpretation given it by 'Ali thinks well of Christians out of charity; while, quite on the contrary, the Turkish religion according to the theory of 'Umar does not do so.

"3. The particular things that the king of Persia offers to do and permit in favour of Christians his Majesty has been pleased to put in a separate document for the more complete satisfaction of Your Holiness, i.e.:

"(a) to cause to submit to the obedience of Your Holiness and the Holy Apostolic See all schismatic Christians in his realms, whether Georgians, Armenians or of whatever other kind they may be; (b) to bring into his realm preachers and 'founders' of the Christian religion, and the free practice of the Christian religion with very genuine privileges for all.

"4. As to the manner of introducing the first principles of religion without publicly scandalizing the people at the beginning, he leaves that to me to discuss with Your Holiness alone, as being the main point of his secret business alluded to in first letter of credence . . ."

What action Pope Clement VIII took in 1601 on the remarkable document just translated does not appear in the papers annexed, whatever may have been the instructions he issued to his nuncios at European Courts; but it is manifest that no such confederacy resulted as was advocated by Shah 'Abbas. Sir Anthony Sherley remained in Italy for a considerable time before moving to Spain:

"He has continual correspondence by letter with the king of Persia, whom he tells 'that he is stopping on in Italy in his' (the king's) 'service, and continues to give him (the Shah) hopes that he will return . . .',"

despite the wording of a Brief from Pope Clement VIII to Shah 'Abbas dated 17.5.1601 (*vide* Arch. Vat. Arm. XLIV, vol. 45, p. 127 (136), No. 143):

"We have given another letter to the same effect written to Your Highness both to our beloved son the cavalier Anthony Sherley and to that distinguished person Husain

“’Ali Baig, who came in Your name to us with the object of bringing about a friendship between us. From that letter of Ours, written at great length, You will understand abundantly how with ready good will We reciprocate the like to You in all kindness of regard, and how ardently We desire Your glory and safety. And because Husain ‘’Ali Baig said that he wanted to proceed to Our very dear son in Christ, Philip the Catholic king of the Spains, whereas Anthony said that he wanted to set off direct to Your Highness, so that, as quickly as might be, he might reach You, this plan of his was of great satisfaction to Us, and We have given to him separately this letter to be delivered to You along with another of greater length. For it will please Us greatly that You should learn the more speedily how greatly We desire to cement most closely with You a sincere friendship, and frequently to send envoys and letters to You, so that We may often get news of Your welfare and promote Your success, as much as We can with God. Other matters Your Highness will learn more fully, as We have said, from that previous letter of Ours handed over to the said Anthony. Given at (the Basilica of) the Holy Apostles, Rome, under the Fisherman’s ring, 17.5.1601, in the tenth year of Our Pontificate.”

The Pope helped even to the extent of writing a Brief, 25.5.1601, to the Captain General of Hurmuz to assist Sir Anthony when he returned by that route (see appendix of Latin Briefs). Then, as regards the Persian joint-envoy, less than a month later the Pope wrote to explain to ‘Abbas I why three of the suite of Husain ‘Ali Baig might not return to Persia: it is to be doubted, however, whether that Shah did receive the news with the pleasure the Pope presumed. Dated 6.6.1601 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLIV, vol. 45, p. 216) this Brief ran:

“After that he had been with Us for a number of days, the highly respected personage, Husain ‘Ali Baig, whom Your Highness sent to Us and whom We have seen with much pleasure and treated with every consideration together with all his companions, when he had already been kindly and honourably received by Us in farewell audience, and was about to depart from this dear City of Ours, his three companions said that they wished to become Christians and to be regenerated by the sacred laver of baptism. These are Shah Husain, Riza and ‘Ali, who when carefully questioned openly and publicly answered that they wanted to receive the Christian Faith and be baptized. Therefore, since they are grown men and possessed of the faculty of reasoning, and without any force or fear of anyone whatsoever, but of their own free will and voluntarily desire to profess the Christian religion, We, who from Our office are bound to open to all seeking it the gate of life and eternal salvation by baptism, could not repel and reject them. For, when it be a question of the salvation of the eternal soul, We are unable not to receive those coming voluntarily to Christ the author of life and salvation. So, just as it has happened, We write to tell Your Highness of the matter, so that You may not be surprised if, the three men above-named do not return to Persia with Husain ‘Ali Baig; but We trust of Your magnanimity and of that goodwill, which You openly bear towards Us, and which We in turn have made manifest in respect of You and Yours in every way that this will be in no wise annoying to You, but acceptable and pleasing rather, in that for this cause, so long as some of Your people are with Us, so much the more will be the bond of affection between Us, and friendship grow firm, which We also much desire of You.”

Meanwhile in Persia, in June 1599, during the time that a certain Fr. Emmanuel de Santos, a Portuguese friar from Goa, was crossing the country (he stopped 20 days at Isfahan¹):

“there arrived at two or three days’ interval, one after the other, three ambassadors sent by the Sultan to the Persian king: they were demanding the latter’s eldest son as a hostage, and guarantees of friendship. He” (Fr. Emmanuel) “says that the Persian king

¹ *Vide* Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, p. 149. He had left Goa in February 1599, and in May took the road to Lar. The report is dated 27.1.1601, and indirect, coming from another Religious in Italy.

"received with much honour and very great welcome those ambassadors, to whom, however he gave no answer, except on one day when he entertained them at a great banquet, at which were present all the nobles of Persia. Then he said at table in a loud voice these very words: 'The Grand Turk' (i.e. Sultan of Turkey) 'by these ambassadors who have come here demands of me my son, the prince, as a hostage: and I reply to you, the ambassadors, that my son, the Prince, is and will be king too of all I possess: and since I have no power to send a king as hostage to a king, you will make answer to the Turkish Sultan that I am not willing to send him my son', the Persian (king) saying this with great haughtiness. With that the three ambassadors in question received their dismissal."

The answer of 'Abbas I to Sultan Muhammad III's desire to be assured of peace was even more forcible, if more tardy, than those words. For the friar named remained in Qazwin and Gilan from November 1599 till July 1600, and was afterwards at Ardabil and Tabriz, and in October 1600 had gone on to Van, Bitlis and Karkamish, and, before reaching Aleppo, learnt from an Armenian caravan that Shah 'Abbas had attacked Tabriz and Ganjeh with two columns, and that the inhabitants of Tabriz were pleased at the reoccupation of their city by the Persians, for the deliverance it gave them from tyrannies of the Turks.

"The said friar affirms that he had *seen it with his own eyes in writing, and had heard the publishing of a public proclamation which had been made in Persia by order of the king, that all Christians who might wish to live in his dominions could do so in security, and also perform all the practices of their Religion and Sacraments: that they could bring in their merchandize without paying anything: that they might make their wills and nominate their heirs at pleasure, and that, whoever might die without leaving a will, the property of such a person should be kept in special and faithful custody by the captains and governors of the district. . .*"

This independent evidence coming from the East may, in some measure, make the reader less sceptical as to the statements by Sir Anthony Sherley in Prague and Rome representing the genuine intentions of 'Abbas I, and as to his eagerness for Christian support in 1600.

Pope Clement VIII was businesslike in his promptitude to acknowledge to 'Abbas I the arrival of Sherley and Husain 'Ali Baig and the receipt of their proposals, and to dispatch emissaries to Isfahan, as desired by the Shah in the persons—utterly unworthy, as it transpired—of the priest, Francisco da Costa, and the layman Diego de Miranda, two Portuguese from Goa. The former had come to Europe at the end of the previous year, 1600, from India: he had left Hurmuz 12.5.1599, and arrived in Isfahan in July 1599: in Rome he had made a report "regarding the embassy sent by the Persian king",¹ a report docketed as having been sent on 4.8.1600 to Cardinal Aldobrandini (the Pope's nephew): he had also been responsible to the authorities in Rome for the assertion that:

"What generally speaking can be said of the king is that he shows himself well disposed towards Christians, and desires extremely to have priests and Christians in his realms."

That modicum of acquaintance of his with the country, king and people seemingly commended him as a suitably informed person to trust with the conveyance of the Briefs of the Sovereign Pontiff.

How much responsibility Fr. da Costa must bear for all the sequel of misunderstanding in Rome about the real attitude of 'Abbas I and his grandees towards the Christian religion, and for the launching of the missions of the Augustinians and Carmelites through the grossly inaccurate statements by this Portuguese Religious is confirmed by a Brief of Pope Clement VIII himself to king Philip of Spain and Portugal (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLIV, vol. 44, p. 231, No. 243). The importance attached to the imaginative fictions of this itinerant priest, the enthusiasm of the Pope to stir up all quarters so as to make the mission a success, the preliminary

¹ See Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, pp. 178-9.

designation of the Society of Jesus to undertake it (why did it not?), the foreshadowing of the creation of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide of 1622, call for quotation of the Brief in full:

"Pope Clement VIII to Our very dear son in Christ Philip, the Catholic king of the Spains.

"... We have often heard, and We think Your Majesty has heard that the king of the Persians by many and quite evident tokens is reported to show a spirit certainly favourable towards the Christian religion; but lately We have learnt this much more definitely from the Portuguese priest, Francesco Costa, who came to Rome from India through Persia and whom the noble Duke of Suessa [*? sic*] your ambassador, introduced to Us. He told some astonishing stories and such as can draw tears of joy from one who meditates on the ways of the Lord—that the king has at his Court very many Christian courtiers and grandees, whom He personally pointed out with much pleasure on occasion quite openly as Christians: that he very much longs for priests and clergy from Us and from the Church of Rome: that for this reason he had dispatched a certain embassy to Us and manifests himself keen of Our friendship and regard: that, besides, he has ordered a church to be built so that God may there be worshipped by the Christian rite.

"When We considered these and many other matters more attentively, and summoned to counsel also Our beloved sons the Cardinals of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide no less devout than circumspect, mindful that it had been said by Christ the Lord to Blessed Peter and to Us in him: 'row out into deep water and let out your nets for a draught of fishes' and finally knowing that with God no word is impossible, We resolved that We ought in no wise to let slip an opportunity so great and offered by heaven, but to send a letter to the king of the Persians as carefully written as the weightiness of so important a business demands; and although that king's envoys have not yet reached Us and, on account of the length of the journey and manifest dangers, it is highly uncertain whether and when they are likely to come, nevertheless it is Our pleasure to send priests to him quickly, lest We cause any delay whereby the seed of Divine grace in that great king's heart may not take root (God Himself granting the increase through the preaching of the Gospel) and that on those peoples, who are in darkness and the shadow of death, life and light may, if it please God Almighty, shine: and lastly so that that friendship and goodwill which bids fair to bring to the whole Christian commonwealth and to Your Majesty and to Your illustrious House of Austria manifold advantages, as You very well understand, may be brought about with a prince so powerful and so hostile to the Tyrant of the Turks.

"While then We were debating about sending suitable clergy, We straightway cast Our eyes on the Society of Jesus, which is a kind of perennial nursery of gallant and loyal labourers in the vineyard of the Lord, who, being especially dedicated to this work from their obedience to Us and the Apostolic See, have won great praise in the East, most particularly in India, for preaching the Gospel. So We bade Our beloved son Claude, the Praepositus General of that Society, send to the king from these same East Indies and from that province nearest to the country of the Persians some priests and workers, who led by the Holy Ghost would break up with the plough of the Gospel as it were fields endowed with reason the hearts of the king himself and of the people, and make a sowing of the word of God. Now the Lord is powerful and able thus to prepare their minds . . . for We wish the greatest speed, so far as it can be done, to be used lest Satan, the old enemy of the human race, strew some difficulties in the way and hinder God's work.

"So We the more urge Your Majesty and require of You most powerfully in the Lord to issue Your royal letters to the Viceroy of India and to the Captain of Hurmuz and have them very carefully written, and to bid them earnestly to take all thought for the advancement of this mission, and that all things which shall be needed or suitable for getting

"ships ready and their journey and voyage expedited be attended to with all briskness and speed, so that those labourers, whom Our beloved son, the Provincial of the Society in India, shall delegate on the instructions of his General to leave for Persia, may be helped by the advice of that same Viceroy and the Captain (-General at Hurmuz), so that as soon as they have embarked they make for Hurmuz and thence proceed straight into Persia, and so, as far as it should be allowed, safely, commodiously and quickly to the Court of the king himself for much indeed depends on speed. . . . But We have given instructions to Our venerable Brother, the Archbishop of Sipontium, Our Apostolic Nuncio, with respect to the very many letters of the same style to be written and sent to Us with all haste, then to deal with Your Majesty, as in a matter particularly dear to Ourselves. . . . Given at S. Peter's, Rome, under the Fisherman's Ring, the 4th day of September, in the Jubilee year 1600, the ninth year of Our Pontificate. . . ."

The Latin of Clement VIII's reply to 'Abbas I under the seal of the Fisherman's Ring, 25.1601, is given in the appendix: here is an English version of it:¹

"Clement the VIIIth, Pope, to the most puissant prince, the illustrious king of the Persians.

"Most puissant and illustrious king, greeting and acceptance with whole heart of the light of the divine grace offered by God,

"In these last days there have reached this dear city of Ours, ark of the Christian religion and port of the nations, those whom, as they themselves report, You have sent to Us, the nobleman Anthony Sherley and the distinguished Husain 'Ali Baig, whose arrival was very pleasing to Us since they came to Us from so great a king, and a prince of such might and endowed, as We hear, with so many embellishments of mind and body, and from so far distant and remote regions, and brought to Us (as they themselves affirm)² Your most welcome letters, which We have received with singular delight, whilst on those, who handed them to Us in Your name, We have gazed with a joyful countenance, and We have welcomed them with all benignity and ordered that they should be treated with every courtesy by Our dependents—which they will be able to report to Your Highness much more copiously: and lastly We made a point of listening benevolently and attentively to those matters which they related to Us in Your name. For the like in affection We reciprocate to You, and just as You by Your letters and by word of mouth through Your envoys profess that You are seeking Our favour and friendship, so We in turn, with an equal sentiment of goodwill, make reply to You from out this Our friendliness and concord, as it were from some fountain, We perceive that great boons can flow abundantly, both for the benefit and glory of the whole Christian estate and for Your own and that of Your illustrious Crown—a fact of which You, of Your good sense, are not ignorant but very well understand (then too it is peculiar to the Divine power and wisdom) that just as from a small seed huge trees are produced, so too from trifling beginnings great things are brought to pass by it. For the ways of God are not like the ways of men, but He does whatsoever He wills in heaven and on earth; and it is much to be hoped that in the supreme goodness of God, if we shall only be willing to be of brave and lofty spirit, the time has come when the most monstrous tyrant of the Turks, whose insatiable lust for domination is confined by no limits, not only will be restrained, but completely conquered. Of this fact there are manifest evidences, since in the last years he has suffered great defeats at the hands of Christian princes on land and sea. For that reason so much the more Your most lofty spirit ought to be excited and inflamed against the most foul and arrogant enemy who has inflicted very serious injury and losses on You Yourself, and Your ancestors too: and We indeed deal with You as the Supreme

¹ *Vide Brev. Clementis VIII*, in Arm. XLIV (45), p. 105, No. 124.

² Note the apparent caution and doubt of the Pope as to the genuineness of the Letters of Credence presented: "Tuasque, quemadmodum ipsi affirmant"; perhaps there was a lack of orientalists able to read Persian at the Papal Court.

"Pontiffs of Rome, Our predecessors, often dealt with Your father and ancestors, i.e. "that You may be kindled by just grief and not suffer to go unpunished the most bitter "enemy to the fame of the Persian kings, who strives to crush all indeed but You in particular with a yoke of slavery which would be very hard to bear, but attack him so fiercely "that he will repent at long last of his impudence and arrogance.

"As to that which You signify that You desire, and which those whom You sent to Us "have also related in Our presence, that the Christian kings and princes should enter "into a league against the Turk with You, We desire the same and We shall pledge to this "Our functions and character of Papal authority But affairs of great moment require "careful handling and no small time. Meanwhile there are not lacking those of our princes "such as are keeping him (the Turk) engaged with military operations and attacking him, "especially Our most dear son, Rudolph the Emperor-elect, who constantly wages war "with him and even now, this very summer, is about to wage it: and We also are helping "him and are sending Our auxiliary forces against the Turks, and by every sort of pressure "We are working on the Catholic princes Our sons to bring help to the same Emperor "elect. Therefore it is of Your prudence and Your good judgment to make use of this "occasion and, whilst the Turk dispatches the flower of his army into Hungary and is "held up by Christian arms, do You go and fall on him and attack with Your steel his "so-to-say denuded flank, so that perplexed by fighting on two sides and assailed in several "places, like some wild beast worried by the onset of many hunters and enfeebled by the "spears thrown together at it, he may be at length brought to the ground.

"There should be no delay, therefore, lest the opportunity pass by, but what You see "Our people doing on their side You do on Yours, and attack the Turk as hard as You "can simultaneously. Thus You will be of assistance to the Christians and the Christians "to You in turn; and that for which We all look will be accomplished of itself, when the "common enemy weakened by a twin assault will break down and perish. This will open "up a larger and easier means of access to bringing about the confederacy which You "desire, and We shall take the more effective action in regard to it when it shall have "become patent to all that You with the greatest zeal, the utmost ardour and all Your force "are applying Yourself to the ruin of that enemy whom You yearn to be attacked and "subdued by others as well—which, as We have said, several of the Christian princes are "already doing, so far as in them lies. We however with all Our heart and strongly are "promoting Your advantage and interests and furthering Your renown, and shall continue "to do so—which You can easily perceive from this that, before Your envoys, whom You "sent to Us, had reached Rome, We had already sent off to You with Our letters couched "in most affectionate terms two of Our familiars, Our well-beloved sons Francisco Costa, "a priest of Christ, and Diego (Didacus) Miranda Henrique, both of them Portuguese and "very dear to Us. When by God's help they shall have arrived safe and sound in Your "presence, which We desire more than can be told, You will indeed understand the more "extensively from Our letter and their speech what an exalted opinion We have of Your "valour, what kindly feelings We entertain for You, and how greatly We desire that not "only You should flourish exceedingly with every human happiness, but that You should "also enjoy that eternal felicity and blessedness in Heaven, which no one can attain except "one reborn of water and the Spirit if he shall have acknowledged the truth in and professed "the Christian Faith.

"For this reason We derived incredible pleasure from that portion of Your letter and "from the conversation of those same two distinguished men whom You sent to Us" (where it was said) "that it is Your great wish that entry to Your realm and countries shall be "open to Christians and especially to those who shall be sent by Us, trade be free to "Christians and Persians, and that the Christians themselves shall enjoy and possess not "only immunity and many favours and privileges abundantly granted by You, but also "that they may build churches and temples to God most high for the Christian rite within "Your realm and jurisdiction, that they may have priests and presbyters to perform

"the Divine office, administer the Sacraments, preach the word of God and everywhere spread it and sow the light and seed of the Gospel of Christ for salvation to every believer.

"Nothing can befall more pleasing to Us than these things, nothing more acceptable to God, nothing more salutary to Yourself and bringing You greater fame: for, when truly and with all Your heart You render service for the glory of God, He also, by whom alone kings reign, will make You glorious and the conqueror of Your enemies, the Turks, triumphing over them.

"So in a short time We shall dispatch to You priests, doctors of the truth and teachers of salvation, as We have promised by other letters of Ours, which We had given to the above-named Francisco and Didacus to carry to You. Again and many times We commend them to You, and We beg that You will receive them graciously and that You will send them back to Us, just as We have esteemed Your representatives and return them to You again with much expression of Our regard and with Our letters. We have spoken to them abundantly of those very matters, about which We write to You, and they have been able to perceive from even Our countenance and Our eyes Our exceptional goodwill for You and desire for Your glory.

"May God Almighty, who placed You on the throne of the great Cyrus the king, give You a wise heart and strengthen You from on high with valour and fortitude so that You may overcome Your enemies the Turks and restore the light of the Gospel of Christ in the country of the Persians, where formerly it shone far and wide, and may You so surpass all kings who were before You in that kingdom in the magnitude and glory of Your feats, that no other age and no posterity be ignorant of Your fame, nor ever become silent in Your praises. Given at the Holy Apostles, Rome, under the (seal of the) Fisherman's Ring, 2nd May 1601, in the tenth year of Our Pontificate."

When brought to 'Abbas I, such an answer must have afforded him no satisfaction, and indeed have caused irritation, for it advanced matters not a step towards the desired common action: he already knew of the Emperor Rudolph's operations in Hungary and had explained that these were insufficient for the purpose: of any intention, or ability, to get Spain and Venice, France, Tuscany, Malta, Poland to send military or naval forces there was no word. Even the 'bona fides' of his envoys, Sherley and Husain 'Ali Baig, was cast in doubt.

The Brief, to which Pope Clement VIII alluded as having been already dispatched to Shah 'Abbas by Fr. Francisco Costa and Diego Miranda, had been written some two months earlier, namely on 24.2.1601. It is of no brevity (*vide* the Latin text in the appendix: or Arch. Vat. Arm. XLIV, vol. 45, p. 45 (No. 61), but of interest in its entirety because, not only does it reveal that an idea of dispatching Jesuits to Persia had first been in Pope Clement's mind, but that Rome had been led by the said Francis Costa and other travellers to hope much from alleged indications of 'Abbas I's personal inclination towards the Christian religion, tales woven round activities and talk of the monarch wrongly understood, or greatly exaggerated by those irresponsible observers. So this particular Brief of Pope Clement VIII is based altogether on the conception that 'Abbas I would be ready to undergo instruction in the Catholic Faith, and so desirous of priests being sent to him, and of building churches for the Christians: it is an exhortation to the Persian sovereign to persevere on the road to baptism and so, welded by one common faith with the princes of Christendom, to be the readier to conduct joint operations against the Turk.

It reads in translation.

"Pope Clement VIII to the illustrious king, the most puissant prince of the Persians.

"Most puissant and illustrious king, greeting and the acceptance with Your whole heart of the light of Divine grace which God offers. Great is the force of virtue and great its efficacy; its beauty stirs in us a great love towards those even whom we have never seen. This is Our feeling in fact in liking You, for even though We be separated from You by

“a very long space of sea and land and have not seen You at any time, yet having heard from very many a number of fine accounts of Your outstanding valour and Your royal greatheartedness and Your remarkable bravery and the other guerdons of nature heaped on You by God most high, the giver of all good things—to have had word frequently of these facts about You has made Us feel an affection for You—nay also desire Your affection in return, and yet it has been told Us, to Our great pleasure, that You being already of uncommon goodwill towards Us seek Our regard and friendship, and besides have sent an embassy to Us with many signs of esteem and veneration for Us. Still this embassy, if it have been sent, has not yet reached Us.

“But moreover We have heard this of You that You mention the name of Christian with respect, and display a ready inclination towards the Christian religion which alone teaches and shows the true road to salvation and bliss. For it is said that even persons very closely connected with You are Christians, and that in Your royal court are many powerful men most dear to You who profess themselves to belong to Christ, and this, at Your bidding, they openly demonstrate by the sign of the Cross that gives salvation and life, our glory, whereon the Saviour of the world Himself and the author of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Father’s eternal Son clothed in our mortal flesh wondrously achieved our salvation in the midst of the earth.

“Now if these tidings be true (as true We hope them to be and We desire it with all Our heart) they assuredly fill Our spirit with so great joy that We cannot by any words sufficiently express the greatness of that same joy. But We know that with God Almighty no word is impossible: He alone is King of kings and through Him all kings reign and in His hand are the hearts of kings to turn whithersoever He will. It was He Who in very ancient times and centuries indeed far removed from Our memory took the right hand of the most valorous Persian king Cyrus and subdued nations before his face and overturned kings and humbled the proud and powerful ones of the earth. And Cyrus himself, so very famous by God’s aid through many victories, set free the people of God captive in Babylon and, moved by His inspiration, decreed that the Lord’s temple which had been destroyed by the king of the Chaldaeans be once more built in Jerusalem, and the golden and silver vessels of the temple that had been carried away he bade be restored, as is handed down by the records of sacred literature.

“Well, O most puissant king of the Persians and successor of Cyrus the great himself, We now hear about You that You desire churches of the Christian rite to be built in Your kingdom, or perhaps have even begun their building already, so that in them God be continually praised and the holy sacrifices offered and the sacred Gospel of Christ preached to the salvation of every believer: and on that account they relate that You are seeking for Christian priests and presbyters to be sent from the Roman Church.

“This, O king, is great news and the start of greater things, and indeed of very great ones, as We hope in God’s exceeding mercy by Whose Spirit We doubt not Your heart is moved to such excellent thoughts. For, if You truly seek Our friendship—that, namely, of the Roman Pontiff and father of Christian kings, if You desire the expounding of the faith of Christ in Your provinces, for churches to be built, and to have with You teachers and masters of the Gospel, and lastly that Christ’s name and the Christian religion be truly propagated in Your very wide territory, be of good cheer for both God himself will be Your help and We too by the aid and help of God himself will willingly favour these desires of Yours with especial pleasure.

“Rightly do you desire that priests should be sent to You from this holy Roman Church, which is the mother and mistress of all the churches which there are in the whole world. For just as there is one God and one faith and one baptism, so there is one Roman church, the mistress of truth, the foundation of unity and home of the Christian religion, in which Peter the most blessed Prince of the Apostles, whom Christ the Lord set as chief shepherd

"of His sheep, by the Divine plan placed his Apostolic See, in which holy see after so many centuries have run their course, after a long and never-broken succession of Pontiffs We at this time, though lowly and unworthy, preside by the disposal of the Holy Spirit.

"Willingly, indeed, We shall send to You now presbyters and priests of Christ, to announce to You and to Your peoples the Gospel truth, and, if You should hear it with humble heart and embrace it and make up Your mind both to obey at last in perfection God, who is wondrously calling You, and to enlist under Jesus Christ the author of our salvation and giver of eternal life, then only will both You Yourself be truly happy and You will cause true happiness to Your realms, and You will add to the old fame of the Persian kings such a mass of Your own glory that posterity will never be silent concerning Your merits and praises.

"Now there are in the East priests and workmen of Christ, faithful and strenuous sons of Ours in Christ, beloved, of that Society whose title is from the most sweet name of Jesus and which fights for God under Our peculiar patronage and that of this holy Apostolic See, and which has planted the victorious Cross of Christ in even the farthest regions of the East and of the Indies and has sown the Gospel seed for the salvation of believers, and is zealous to do so by God's help, sparing no labours that by the word of saving doctrine and the example of a most pure life and lastly by the Divine washing of baptism and the heavenly sacraments it may make souls a gain for Christ, as We think not to be unheard, nor altogether unknown to You.

"From this Society, therefore, and from those regions and places of the East belonging to the sway of the most puissant prince and Our well-beloved son in Christ, Philip the Catholic king, places too that are less far from Your dominions and provide a readier way for going to and fro, We shall take care to send to You priests and in that number which shall be necessary; in fact We have now already given commands on the point. In fine all that the salvation of Yourself and Your peoples demands We shall most zealously under God's blessing furnish and We await naught else but to know more clearly Your whole will, and with much greater certitude and at much greater length from Yourself, i.e. from Your letters and messengers those same things, which, as We have said, We have heard by rumour and the narratives of many.

"Meanwhile, in order that Our affection for You and desire of bringing about a sincere friendship between us may stand forth with clearer evidence, it has pleased Us to give You this Our letter as a witness of Our goodwill for You and a sort of pledge of Our kindly feelings. It will be handed You by these Our two beloved sons, whom We expressly send You viz. Francisco Costa, a priest and Religious of the same Society of Jesus, distinguished in erudition and in zeal of God, and the diligent and careful Diego (Didacus) de Miranda, both of them Portuguese and both experienced and approved by Us and very much in favour, and who have also been at other times in Persia and are very devoted to Your royal person. Indeed too Diego conversed at Venice with Your familiar, Husain 'Ali Baig, and related to Us the things he had learnt from him about You, which were indeed delightful news to Us.

"From them, therefore, You will understand Our mind much more openly and at greater length once they have come safe to You, with the Angel of God leading them, and moreover that point in particular—how desirous We are of Your salvation, how We long for Your increase of glory. Wherefore We beg of You to trust them most fully, just as if Ourselves spoke in person with You, and We are confident too that You will receive these messengers of Ours and beloved of Us with honour and kindness, for We shall use a like kindness towards Yours whom You are sending Us, so that our mutual liking may put out stronger roots and daily grow firmer. For truly from our union of hearts and wills many and various kinds of benefits will be able to abound, which We doubt not You in Your prudence well perceive, but this one above all—the checking by You and Ourselves and the whole of the Christian world to be given to the unceasing and most hostile

"enemy the Turk, who with unbearable pride and insatiable desire to rule longs most eagerly to oppress all kingdoms and all territories, and to lay them under the yoke of a most hard slavery.

"But We hope that God's mercy will humble the proud man and his arm, and that He will break his teeth in his mouth and shatter the grinding teeth of the lion, of which event clear tokens have these last years been given by God in Hungary, showing that that most monstrous lion can be vanquished.

"We, however, in accord with Our pastoral office over and above the aids We have supplied and shall supply to the Emperor-elect Rudolph, Our very dear son, for opposing that foulest foe, are especially engaged in stirring up the kings and Catholic princes, Our dear sons in Christ, by means of Our office to meet the common enemy by efforts in common: and We are in great hopes of gaining this by God's mercy.

"Now if You also, moved by righteous indignation, at last resolve to avenge so many grave wrongs inflicted on You by the Turks, and mindful of the ancestral glory of the Persians and of Your own valour take up with all Your strength and zeal a war no less glorious for You than necessary, assuredly that wild and fierce beast will be laid low, slain by wounds from all quarters.

"This consummation We may so much the more hope and promise because We seem to see in Your heart the force of God's moving when We hear you are so well disposed towards the name of Christ and the Christian religion. So may God and the Father of mercies Himself perfect His work which He has begun in You, that You may be made with Us and the Christian princes one body. With You in closest conjunction may they consider all Your interests their own and so be the more strongly inflamed against the common enemy for the forwarding of the common safety and glory. Now We beg with all Our heart the God of armies, in Whose hand are victories and triumphs, that even as once before Cyrus so before You too He may march and shatter the gates of brass and break in sunder the bars of iron and, all difficulties overcome, may make You a triumphant victor.

"Be then of brave and lofty spirit, and as befits You ponder great things and make great emprises so that You may not only uphold by valour and greatheartedness the glory of Your forebears but may even increase and enlarge it.

"Given at Rome at S. Peter's under the Fisherman's Ring, 24th February, 1601, in the tenth year of Our Pontificate."

But on the same day, 24.2.1601, another Brief was issued (*vide* Arch. Vat. Arm. XLIV, vol. 45, p. 49 (58), No. 62), and is probably unique in being addressed by a Pope to a consort of a Shah in Persia as his "dearest daughter in Christ" with the Apostolic benediction (which was not given to her husband or other non-Christians): it was intended doubtless for the Georgian mother of Safi Mirza, i.e. for an inmate of a Muslim 'haram'. It is stated therein as a known fact that also the mother of 'Abbas I, the wife of Shah Muhammad Khudabandeh, had been a Christian, a double relationship sufficient to explain some of the knowledge, and interest in matters, of Christian dogma, differences of creed and ritual observances displayed by 'Abbas I, as narrated later in these annals. Equally long as the other Brief, then, it took up the position that it was providential for there to be such means to hand to complete in the Safawi king the working of the leaven of inclination towards Christianity already manifest in him—as S. Paul had written "that an infidel husband be sanctified by a wife who is a believer": and so the Brief commended Fr. de Costa and Miranda to the Baigum's interest. However much instruction in the Christian Faith, practice of the Georgian rite, this particular wife of 'Abbas I may have had in her earlier life—and a number of Georgian and Circassian princelings and chieftains at that period were Muslim-born or renegades—it is probable that, once in the 'andarun', she had had to conform to Shiah worship: even if this Brief were given into her hands one may doubt whether an interpreter for the Latin could be found in her forced seclusion. It ran:

"Pope Clement VIII to Our dearest daughter in Christ, the illustrious queen of the
"Persians.

"Dearest daughter of Ours in Christ greeting and the Apostolic blessing. Wondrous
"are God's decrees and inscrutable the ways of That wisdom which ordains men's affairs
"powerfully yet agreeably towards His eternal glory—for we do not consider aught to have
"been done without the great oversight of the Divine will—that Your husband, the most
"puissant king of the Persians, born of a Christian mother, has gained in You also, as We
"hear, a Christian spouse. For by God's helping grace We hope that, even as S. Paul
"wrote that the infidel husband is sanctified by the faithful wife,¹ so too the king himself
"will be brought to the wondrous light of Christian truth and faith. Of this condition of
"affairs there are said to exist manifest truths, for it has been reported to Us about this same
"king, Your husband, that besides his many kingly virtues and fine endowments of mind
"and body he has no small leanings towards our true and holy Christian religion, without
"which no one can be saved, no one gain eternal life and bliss. For he has not only You,
"who profess Christ's Faith, to share his couch and throne and love ardently, adorned and
"endowed as You are with superior natural gifts, but he has also, they relate, in his royal
"court many men in high position and specially dear to himself, who either already are
"Christians or desire to enrol themselves with Christ. Nay but the king himself is said to
"be so kindly disposed towards Us, whom God's ordering though beyond Our deserts has
"willed to be the head of the Catholic Church and the father and shepherd of the whole
"Christian people, that (he desires) a real and solid friendship and alliance with Us (and
"seeks) for priests to be sent, who in churches built by the king himself, and dedicated to
"the true God Who made heaven and earth, will announce the tidings of salvation, and
"offer and devote the prayers and sacrifice in the Christian rite.

"So, if the stories that often reach Us are true, as from Our inmost sentiments and heart
"We hope them to be true, assuredly it is some great thing and to be remembered down
"the ages which is being prepared and ordered by God's mercy, viz. the restoring of the
"Christian religion once more to those widespread realms and territories where in ancient
"times, before the detestable errors of the impious seducer Muhammad, it is known to have
"flourished. For, as naught can be called or thought finer or more divine than this gift of
"God, so also how great the praise, how great the glory, how great the advantages to Your
"husband the king will be brought by it can easily be conjectured and estimated by Your
"own natural perspicacity. Firstly indeed, as You know, without the knowledge of the
"true God and His true Faith all human bliss is naught, as there is no way to eternal life
"open to anyone except by the saving washing of baptism he be reborn in Christ, and
"having entered Christ's fold, that is the Catholic Church, he be made a living member
"of Christ through the sacrament of regeneration and by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

"But if that same most puissant king, Your husband, with God as the author of it, should
"both gain so great a boon for his own self, and should procure it for his realms and peoples,
"then nothing would have ever existed happier, nothing more illustrious than that: he
"would surpass all previous Persian kings in renown and glory, and like another Cyrus and
"another Constantine the Great he would be celebrated by the tongues of all races and by
"the most brilliant memory and deathless praise of all posterity.

"In addition, bound most firmly by this very strong bond of religion to Us and to Our
"sons, the Christian kings and princes, and as it were made one body, he would be then
"a terror to the most savage Turks, both common enemies of the whole Christian folk and
"his own most implacable foes; and he would not only be the cause of their dismay but
"equipped with his might and the flower of his soldiers, backed up also by Our friendship
"and assistance and that of the Christian princes, he would easily—as it were by casting
"a bridle upon him—pull up that most proud tyrant who desires to devour all kingdoms
"and the empire of the whole of Asia in his insatiable greed to rule: nay more, helped by
"the most high God of armies, he would set free so many people oppressed by the pitiable

¹ I. Corinthians, 7.14.

"yoke of slavery and avenge no less righteously than bravely and gloriously so many wrongs inflicted on himself by the Turks. . . ."

Much follows in similar wording or strain to that of the Brief to 'Abbas I of the same date: then, alluding to the dispatch of the two Portuguese:

" . . . They, dearest daughter in Christ, will hand You this letter of Ours, bearing witness "as they do to Our fatherly affection for You and in Our words they will bring You a "message of salvation and great happiness in the Lord, and they will explain the other "matters with which We have charged them. In them You will please have every confidence as being familiars of Ours and sent by Us: and with Your usual dutiful zeal for "God's honour and that love wherewith You deservedly wait on Your royal spouse You "will, pray, take good care that they be kindly welcomed by that same king and given a "gracious and willing hearing. You will, too, please see to it that the matter of holy religion "and perfect friendship between Us and the king shall be happily brought to fruition and "that that great king to Our joy and that of the whole of Christendom shall give himself "personally to Christ. For from this deed very great and numberless boons will flow forth "in the way of his true bliss and fame, and so a door will be opened for the preaching of the "Gospel in Persia and the seed of the Faith will be sown throughout those very wide territories. For We shall take care that faithful labourers, Christ's priests, be sent from the "districts and places near at hand once the king, as We trust, show he truly desires this; "and they will omit no offices of care, toil and charity in order to proclaim the holy gospel "of Christ and the word of life and to spread abroad the light of Christian truth for the "salvation of souls by God's guidance. Now this You will understand at greater length "from these same envoys of Ours; but in particular Francisco, a priest and man outstanding "in erudition, will comfort You in the Lord and, if there be any point belonging to Our "Catholic religion, he will more amply instruct You so that You may the more perfectly "serve God and that You may become as acceptable as possible to Him. For it is by Us "he is being sent, and he comes from this holy Roman Church which is the mother and "mistress of all the faithful, and in her the tradition of the Christian Faith and doctrine "received from the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul personally is preserved as in a pure "well-spring ever undefiled down the ages of the centuries. You see, therefore, well-beloved daughter in Christ, how great and splendid an opportunity is furnished You by "God for the sake of the Christian religion and of Your husband, whom You especially "cherish so as to do most good to him. Onward, then, as far as You are able, for able You "will be with the Spirit of God contributing very greatly to help Our zeal and desire, and to "assist so pious an enterprise by every aid and every care, so that You may gain from Him, "Who adorned You with a crown on earth, the glory of endless bliss in heaven. And "We bestow on You Our fatherly and Apostolic blessing with every token of affection. "Given at Rome at S. Peter's, under the Fisherman's Ring, 24th February, 1601, in the "tenth year of Our Pontificate."

Pope Clement had the re-Christianizing of Persia as close at heart as he had the crushing of the Turkish menace to Christianity in Europe. On 28.2.1601 the Cardinal of S. George,¹ Cardinal Cinthius Aldobrandini, the Pope's nephew, issued their *Instructions to Don Diego de Miranda and Fr. Francisco Costa*,² from which only the following extracts are here translated—in great detail the Cardinal expounded the reasons why Shah 'Abbas should attack the Turks:

" . . . And because the business of the Christian religion is more important and serious "than all the other matters, and with the establishment of it that of the union of arms against "the common enemy would be settled of itself, for that reason you will have to treat of "religion in the first place, if you are granted free access to the king. . . .

¹ He took his title from the ancient diaconate of the Church of S. Giorgio in Velabro.

² Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, pp. 212-8.

"... If (as is most desired) you should find the king disposed, as is pre-supposed, you, "Father Francisco, must offer him yourself and your services for giving instruction in the "catechism, and also the services of other priests: and you, Don Diego, will arrange for "there to come over into Persia from the sea-coasts a number of Fathers of the Company "of Jesus with the order that verbally has been given that you are being dispatched to "Hungary [*? sic*] and Goa by the Catholic king in such connection. . . .

"... As soon as the intentions and objectives of the king with regard to the war, for "which we pre-suppose him to be already ready, are discovered, you will have to cause "him to understand that the fame of his valour reaches as far as these parts. . . .

"You are being given a Brief for the king, in which honourable mention is made of you, "as will be seen from the copy attached . . . just as it is the wish of His Holiness that you "be united, and work jointly together in this important negotiation . . . so, should any "accident or sickness occur, God forbid, or any other hindrance arise to separate you, or "incapacitate one of you, in such case he wishes the other to act as substitute in what you "would have done both together. . . ."

It was by flagrant disobedience of these final injunctions that these two Portuguese envoys brought on their mission a nemesis and ridicule, which its pious aims and dignified sponsors did not deserve.

One report¹ tells part of the story:

"In the first year" (of the century) "there came to Rome from the East Indies, of which "they were natives, Francisco da Costa and Diego de Miranda. They passed through "Persia, and on their arrival reported to His Holiness the affection which the king of "Persia bore him, the favours which for the sake of His Holiness he was doing to Christians, "and that he was sending envoys" (to the Pope). "But both of them begged the Pope to "anticipate this, and before the arrival of such envoys to write to the king. So it fell out; "and they were" (nominated) "the envoys. The Pope gave them two Briefs for the king, "in which the bearers were given honorific designations, i.e. that they were ambassadors "of His Holiness, and that the Shah should give credence to all they said to him in the "Pope's name.

"The Pope granted them 4,000 scudi for the journey. When they had left Rome they "had words together at Venice, and were later reconciled in Poland by the Nuncio there, "Monsignor Claudio Rangoni; and of this and other follies he wrote to Rome. His Holiness "gave orders for them to be stopped, but it had no effect because, when the order arrived, "they had already passed on into Muscovy. There they did some base acts, such as to ask "the Grand Duke to furnish them with their provender and then to sell the victuals which "he gave them and take money in lieu. The quarrels between them grew greatly. The "servants left them, today one, the next day another. . . . At Astrakhan, where they "passed the winter, while Miranda was out of the house, Fr. da Costa forced his way in "and took his (Miranda's) clothing, letters and everything: Miranda went and complained "to the governor, who said that he (Miranda) was mad. They maltreated the Muscovites "and did other foolish things. Da Costa did not give back the clothing to Miranda, but, "when they had arrived in Persia, an English captain who was with Sherley . . . made "da Costa give back his clothing to Miranda, who was almost naked. Peace between "them lasted but a little, because Miranda left the first to find the king, and he had an "iron chain made, and with the backing of some Italians he found there . . . he managed "to put da Costa in chains . . . saying he (Miranda) alone was the ambassador, and da "Costa his chaplain. He was unprovided with money, and he asked an agent of a Venetian "merchant, who came with 20,000 scudi worth of merchandise from India, saying that "he would insure it for His Holiness. As the Venetian did not wish to do so, Miranda

¹ Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, pp. 219-28. This report was undoubtedly furnished by Fr. Paul Simon of Jesus Mary, the Carmelite leader, *vide En Persia*, vol. II, p. 79, by Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus, cited.

"went off to the house where the goods were, broke it open by force, and took away all the goods. Miranda said that he had an order from His Holiness (authorizing him) to take money from any Latin trader. . . . With this money he set up an establishment, engaging some 30 servants, and he had liveries made and silverware, he bought richly adorned tents, velvet chairs, carpets, a canopy under which he was wont to sit, horses and other articles for becoming pomp and show. He kept a splendid table. Besides pages and grooms, when he went out he took two men, who each of them bore a silver mace, and another who bore in front of him a standard with His Holiness' arms. With this pomp and ceremony he went off to the king, who was then in Khurasan. Of Fr. da Costa mention has not been made that he had remained at Qazwin.

". . . When Miranda came to the king, he seated himself at the Shah's side and began to speak of various matters. The king asked him whether he brought letters from His Holiness. He answered 'yes', and took out the Brief from his pocket, and told the Shah to stand up to receive it. The Shah replied:

" 'If you had brought it with the respect due, and not from behind' (your breeches), 'not only should I have got up, but I should have gone out to receive it.'

"Whenever he was on horseback with the king he would ride at his" ('Abbas') "side, and in front of him had borne the standard of His Holiness. He did other like things, for which the king, who is discerning and well-informed of the way things are done over here, used to call him 'the Fool'. He had words with Robert" (Sherley) "the Englishman. . . . The Shah gave him 2,000 scudi for his needs and a fine horse as well as other things. After 3 or 4 months he went off sent in company of an ambassador from the king: and, although he wished to go via Muscovy, the Shah willed that it should be by way of Hurmuz, on the petition of the trader from whom he (Miranda) had taken the goods. The Captain of Hurmuz afterwards obliged him to restore what goods there were to their owner, and to pay the latter the greater part (of the value) of what was wanting.

"The Augustinian Fathers later introduced Fr. Francisco da Costa to the king, whom his manner of dealing pleased more than had done that of Miranda. Therefore he ('Abbas') was wont to show him many favours. He gave him 2,000 piastres a year for his maintenance, besides other gifts. He (Fr. da Costa) was always about the Shah. Once, when da Costa was seated, the very Shah himself on his knees¹ gave him to drink, in order to show the respect he had for the Pope. He (the Shah) caused his (da Costa's) portrait to be painted, as the garb of a prelate with rochet, which he (da Costa) used to wear, took the fancy of the king. In the end he lost the Shah's favour through certain indiscretions. A servant of an Armenian trader brought 5,000 scudi to the house of Fr. da Costa, in order to have them in safety, as he feared that the king of Persia might appropriate them, inasmuch as his master (the Armenian) was a Turkish subject. Da Costa spent the money: and, later, when the trader wanted to have his money, told him that he would not get it. The Armenian complained to the Shah. Da Costa learnt of this, and had the Armenian bastinadoed, afterwards paying him the 4,000 scudi and giving him horses and other property he had. . . . While the Shah was away from Isfahan at the war, either because the lad wanted to be a Christian or for some other reason, da Costa went in person to the house of a Persian who had in his possession an Armenian renegade boy, removed by force the lad and took him to his own house. The Persian complained to the Wazir of the city,² who gave permission for the man to use force in getting back the boy, on condition that da Costa's person was not touched, however. He (the Persian) went with 200 or 300 men: Fr. da Costa and his dependents sallied out armed to prevent them: the Persians killed two of them and wounded others. The Father did not complain to the king, nor did the Shah speak of it, although he knew about it; but from that hour thenceforth the king did not show him the same liking as previously. . . . It is about

¹ The same act by 'Abbas will be narrated about Fr. Antonio de Govea. If it were the practice of 'Abbas to sit on the ground, knees in front, heels tucked under him, as is, or was, till 1930 Persian fashion (non-Europeanized) at meals, this would not have meant any particular act of homage or respect, beyond that mark of politeness in offering the cup with his own hand.

² Doubtless the "daruga" is meant.

" $3\frac{1}{2}$ years since he (Fr. da Costa) left¹ to come to Rome with an ambassador whom the "Shah was sending to His Holiness. . . . They went by way of Muscovy."

The account goes on to describe how even on the return journey Fr. da Costa had a fight with an Armenian in his company over another Armenian lad, and the man was killed

"So that the Shah might not get to hear of it, the governor of Gilan had him (da Costa) "at once put on board ship, and then he was forced to surrender the youth. . . . He stayed "3 years at Astrakhan as² the disturbances in Muscovy did not allow him to travel, and "he was still there when I left Persia. . . . When we were going to Astrakhan, we met him "on the river Volga, as he was coming with a prince (who—so they said in Astrakhan—"was a brother of Dmitri, the Duke of Muscovy, and was accepted as such by the townsmen) "by whom he was much liked: he had two large boats full of merchandize which in part "he had brought away from Persia, in part bought in Astrakhan. . . . All that happened "to him in Persia I learnt from Fr. da Costa himself."³

Far from following the instructions of the Holy See and devoting themselves to its double objective as regard to the Turkish war and the extension of liberties for Christians, Fr. da Costa and Miranda had disastrously damaged the reputation of Christendom in general, and cast a slur on the seriousness on the Pope's intentions in the eyes of the Shah and the Persian notables.

While Diego de Miranda was still in Persia there had arrived from Goa in Isfahan the first Catholic mission to take root in the country, as distinct from isolated Religious or secular priests who had travelled through or made some stay in it—three Religious, Fathers of the Order of Hermits of S. Augustine, sent by the viceroy of the Portuguese Indies,⁴ and named Jeronimo da Cruz, Cristoforo do Spiritu Santo, Antonio de Gouvea. On the evidence of those archives in Rome examined for the present compilation it is difficult to assign, or calculate the date, and even year of their arrival at Isfahan.⁵ It would seem from the words of a report by Fr. John Thaddeus the Carmelite—"the Augustinian Fathers who have been here for 5 years past"—that their arrival in Isfahan would have been between May 1603 and January 1604:⁶ this would fit in with the facts that Shah 'Abbas' letter, quoted below, mentions that he had already sent back Fr. Antonio de Gouvea to the viceroy of Goa, that he had by this

¹ and ² i.e. da Costa had left Persia early in 1604.

³ Quoting Fr. Paul Simon, the author of *En Persia*, vol. II, p. 79, explains how the Carmelites and Fr. da Costa met:

" . . . Prince John was proceeding with 7,000 men . . . to join Dmitri" (the Russian pretender). "When the boats "of the two flotillas crossed, both stopped and everyone disembarked on the banks of the river. They put up the tents "there, and over all the others rose that of the Prince, in which he received our missionaries. According to what Fr. "Paul Simon afterwards wrote, the Prince was taking in his company Fr. Francisco de Acosta, who had gone to Persia "in the time of Clement VIII, and an Armenian, who had gone as ambassador from the king of Poland to the King of "Persia, and two Persian ambassadors, one who was going with Fr. Acosta as ambassador to His Holiness, and the other "to the king of Poland, together with the Armenian we have mentioned. "The Prince," he adds, "stopped and put up "his tents to give us audience. Fr. Francisco de Acosta sent to pay us a visit at once when we arrived. At the end of "a short time the Prince sent to summon us to an audience. Fr. Acosta and the other ambassadors were present. He "promised to give orders to Astrakhan to let us pass on at once into Persia. Fr. Acosta overwhelmed us with attentions "and respect, speaking with many laudatory expressions to the Prince of us, and saying that he (the Prince) should not "look at our poor garb, but at what we represented, and in presence of everyone he kissed the feet of the superior of "the mission, saying that the Christian princes thus esteemed us. He took us to dine with him, and we remained thus "together two days, in which he informed us of many things concerning Persia."

⁴ *Early Spanish and Portuguese Travellers in Persia* quoted hereafter states "by the Viceroy Saldanha". The Carmelite author of *En Persia*, Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus, states that the prior of the Augustinians brought letters from the archbishop of Goa . . . "at that time governing the Indies", and he was Alexis de Menezes. In either case doubtless instructions from the King of Spain or Council of Portugal had moved the authorities in Goa to take the action.

⁵ The present compiler has not had the opportunity of consulting: "Relacam en que se tratam as guerras e grandes victorias que alcancon o grande Rey da Persia Xa Abbas do grao Turco Mahometto e seu filho Amethe: as quais resultaraõ das Embaixadas q por mandado da Catholica e real Magestade de rey D. Felipe segundo de Portugal fizeraõ alguns religiosos da ordem dos Eremitas de S. Augustinho a Persia. Composto dello Padre F. Antonio de Gouvea Lisboa, 1611", mentioned by Sir A. T. Wilson, K.C.I.E., M.P., etc., in his monograph, *Early Spanish and Portuguese Travellers in Persia* (1925), in which work (*Traduction française Rouen 1646*) the clue to the dates of arrival of the Augustinians at Isfahan, and Fr. Antonio's departure is no doubt to be found.

⁶ *Vide* O.C.D. 236 a.—a report itself undated, but which from its contents must have been begun between May 1608 and January 1609.

letter delegated a Persian to accompany Diego de Miranda to Europe, and that he was retaining da Costa at his Court, and also with the statement that da Costa had been introduced to the Shah by the Augustinians,¹ seeing that da Costa himself had left Persia about June 1604, i.e. "3 years he had been in Astrakhan" when Fr. Paul Simon found him leaving there in July 1607.²

When they first arrived 'Abbas had been as well disposed and courteous to these Augustinians as he had been to their fellow-subjects, da Costa and Miranda, coming from Rome: he had questions to settle with the Portuguese of Goa and Hurmuz, as will be related hereafter, in addition to his hope—politically as an ally against the Turks, and commercially in the matter of a market for Persian silk—of closer relations with Philip III of Spain (and Portugal): according to the statement of Fr. Antonio da Gouvea during his later journey of 1608,³ on his first arrival:

"the other time I was here he (the Shah) had been very affectionate with me, having kissed me on the neck more than 10 times, embraced me an infinite number, many times he gave me to drink with his own hand, and paid me many other politenesses. . . ."

Fr. Paul Simon of Jesus Mary asserts⁴ that:

"by the Augustinian Fathers the king of Spain promised to send him ('Abbas) artillery-gunners, engineers, artillery, if he ('Abbas) allowed the Holy Gospel to be preached in his realm. . . ."

and elsewhere in the same account:

"It is true that when the Augustinian Fathers went to Persia the king showed himself extraordinarily affectionate with them, and gave many signs of being well disposed towards the Christian Faith and of wanting to embrace it. . . . In notifying to the king the objects of their mission, *the Augustinian Fathers told him that they came to show him the True Faith, and to baptize him.* He answered that he would discuss that at more length when he had the opportunity. Almost always he kept them near him. He left it to their option to choose a house. He gave them 2,000 scudi yearly for their subsistence, and entertained them several times at banquets, always making them sit near him, and he took one of them into the haram of his women (the andarun), which was an exceptional mark of favour, since he did not even allow his own son to enter it, he made some of them (the women) dance. When the Fathers proposed to him" (that he should adopt) "our Faith, he made show to agree to everything. He gave them, sealed with his small seal,⁵ and also by the prince his son and three of his councillors who alone were present at this, a writing in which he promised to construct a church with bells in every town he should capture from the Turks, to allow the Gospel to be preached, if the King of Spain kept to that which he promised him ('Abbas) by the same Fathers, i.e. to take up arms against the Turks, and to send him artillery and engineers, which up till now has not been fulfilled. As evidence that he still had the mind to fulfil what he was promising, he said that on the following day he would go to their church—as in fact he did, and with his own hands decked the altar. The writing given by the king is with the Augustinian Fathers and I have read it. The Mihmandar told us that the king wanted to make a great bell and a church for the Fathers in Isfahan, asked the Fathers for relics and a piece of the wood of the Cross, and that they gave it to him. When he drank, and in public

¹ Vide Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, pp. 219-23, a report by Fr. Paul Simon. ² *Idem*, and *En Persia*, vol. II, p. 79.

³ Vide O.C.D. 236 a—a report itself undated, but which from its contents must have been begun between May 1608 and January 1609.

⁴ O.C.D. 234 b. Report by Fr. Paul Simon.

⁵ The private seal, which, it will read later, helped to authenticate for the recipients 'Abbas' personal authorship—as opposed to the great seal "of state".

"he used to do so with an old Father of the Augustinians, a great servant of God and much liked by the king, he would make for him the sign of the cross over the drinking-glass: "and by many other signs he showed himself well disposed towards our Holy Faith. . . "

Of the very few original letters in Persian script from the Safawi monarchs preserved in the Vatican the only two by Shah 'Abbas I out of all those he sent with his envoys to Europe happen to be precisely those which deal with these Portuguese Religious and Miranda, and for years had been exposed under glass on exhibition in the Sistine Gallery. They are reproduced here and a typescript¹ in Persian characters is added in the appendix for those who wish to study the language: the translation of the one runs:

"Lord Pope of Rome,"

(The preamble apostrophizes the Sovereign Pontiff in untranslatable epithets as the supreme master of all professing the Christian Faith.)

" . . . After the establishing of the basis of amity and love, and expressing the utmost sincerity and unity, it is submitted to Your sunlike notice and moonlike mind that at this auspicious season the cordial communication, which You had dispatched by those eloquent envoys, namely that most distinguished of Christian literati, the priest Francisco Costa, and that respected gentleman, Diego Miranda, arrived at a most fortunate juncture. Its welcome contents, the substance of which was the expression of Your goodwill and friendly feelings and amity, and a confirmation of the bonds of intimacy, alliance and unity, were duly noted by Us: and from the purport of Your esteemed letter and the charming statements of the eloquent envoys it became evident (to Us) that Our friendship and cordiality have produced a (good) impression on their minds. The statement to that tenor in Your valued letter is the exact truth and a true fact. It is obvious to Your illustrious mind that in past times there has never been a habit of correspondence between the Shahs of Iran and the Sovereigns of Europe, and that they have not exchanged courtesies and acquaintance with one another. Because of the fact that friendship for them" (the Christian princes) "appealed of itself to Our heart, and before any gesture was made on their part, or they had manifested any desire for amity and cordiality, We ourselves took the initiative and opened the doors of correspondence and friendliness, sending an envoy to Your august Court. Now that they have become Our friends, heart and soul, and have reposed faith in Us, and expressed (their) friendship and amity, We shall be their friends more than before, and We desire that terms of intimacy and concord and relations of friendship and amity should ever be observed between Us and the Frankish sovereigns, that Our friendliness and theirs should grow day by day, and that the" (doors of) "traffic with these regions should always remain open to the Christian sects. This fact is evident to Us, that Your august² Majesty is the chief and lord of all the Christian monarchs, and that because of the learning and eminence and excellence and glory and greatness, which You have among the princes of the Franks, all the Christian kings have reverence for You and render You obedience as the Pontiff of the Christian Faith. More than they do We also consider Your Highness³ exalted and are Your friend: and absolutely We do not deviate from Your Highness' desire and advice, and We do not fail for a moment in respecting and honouring the Christian⁴ community, and in paying due attention and care to the Christian sect, who go to and fro in and frequent Our dominions; while the Christian community who remain in this country are all engaged, with tranquillity of mind, in their own places of worship in devotion and prayer to the Lord the Creator of the worlds: and We pay them greater respect and accord them greater esteem than We do to Our own people. It may be that the truth of this state of affairs has

¹ Which Khan Bahadur Mirza Muhammad C.I.E., of Basra, has kindly made, as well as giving his aid to present a version in English as near the original as possible—an extremely difficult matter, when so many pompous expressions are strung together, meaningless in European eyes.

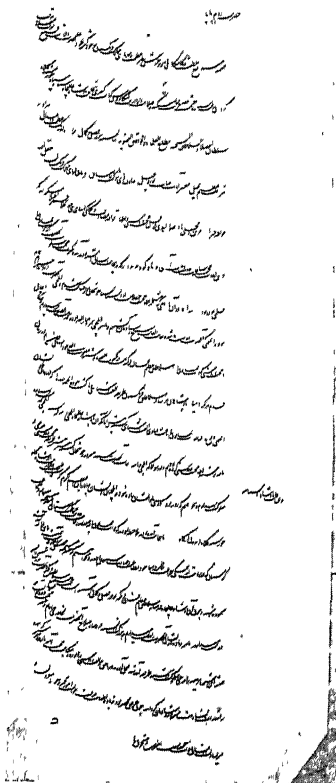
² Hazrat, for which "Holiness" is hardly an equivalent.

³ "An Padishah-i-'Alijah, buzurg wa sarur."

⁴ In the Persian "Kristan", not Masihin.

(Vatican Library, Rome)

(For reproduction in Persian typescript
see Appendix B)



SEAL ON THE REVERSE OF TWO
LETTERS OF SHAH 'ABBAS I
OF 1604

(For translation see p. 95, and for reproduction in Persian typescript see Appendix B)

"come to Your exalted hearing by (way of) Frank merchants and travellers. Their ambassador too, who will wait on You, will represent to You to what extent We¹ show consideration to Christians.

"Now that their Reverences the Padres,² namely the most select of mystics and monks "Fra Antonio and Fra Cristo and Jeron(imo), had come to these parts on behalf of his "royal Majesty" (in the margin—"Don Philip king of Spain"), "We have accorded them "a hearty welcome and paid them whatever courtesy and regard was due. In sooth they "are most accomplished, and their conduct has met with approval: they performed what- "ever were the precepts and tenets of their religion and faith, and the rites of their creed, "and they were very particular and precise in executing the duties of piety and prayer "and the ceremonies of worship and religious observances and abstinence. Since they "had discarded the world they absolutely declined to accept whatever worldly chattels "and objects We offered them and marks of affection We wished to show them.

"We returned Padre Fra Antonio and sent him to his excellency the king of overseas . . . "the governor of Goa; while Fra Cristo and Fra Jeron(imo) remain at Our Imperial Court, "the objects of our consideration and affectionate regard.

"Whereas We have previously sent You an ambassador, and intimated through him the "state of affairs here and the resolution inspired by Our imperial and friendly regard, "and the love and amity which We have for the high and mighty monarchs of Europe and "particularly Your exalted Majesty,³ and whereas it had been stated in the friendly Brief "of Your Highness that Our ambassador⁴ had still not reached You, therefore We have now "delegated and dispatched to You his honour Diego de Miranda together with Bastam "Quli Baig, who is one of Our (imperial) trusty attendants, while his Reverence the priest,⁵ "Francisco Costa, stays here in Our company. If God Almighty wills, as soon as the am- "bassador, whom We had formerly sent, returns,⁶ We shall carry out whatever You may "have written and recommended by him: and, after learning the true facts of the situation "and conditions there" (i.e. in Europe) "and of the resolution arrived at by their Highnesses "the European⁷ monarchs, We shall do whatever may be expedient in every respect, and "dispatch the aforementioned priest to You. We do not depart, absolutely, from Your (his) "wish and advice. Since (our) object was limited to this, further length has been avoided. "May Your affairs end favourably and well."

This letter, together with another also reproduced in the appendix but not translated because issued at the same time and similar though less detailed and less interesting in wording, and probably given separately for Diego de Miranda to carry (it mentions the first and translated letter and sending him to Rome in company of a Persian emissary), is undated, and from its context written in 1603-4. The impression of the seal on the back of this runs, translated: "The slave of the king, successor" (i.e. Imam 'Ali) "'Abbas", with the date "999" (A.H., i.e. the year beginning October 30, 1590—which may be the date when the seal was made, but was not that of the letter to the Pope). Around the circle of the seal are the words: "O Lord, bless the prophet, the successor" (i.e. Imam 'Ali), "the lady" (i.e. Fatimah), "the grandsons" (i.e. the Imams Hasan and Husain), "the devotee" (i.e. the Imam 'Ali Zain-ul-'Abidin),

¹ The Persian words used are: "Nawab-i-Humayun-i-Ma".

² "Padrian" and "Padri" are the words in Persian used.

³ The word "Padishah" is used.

⁴ This refers to a phrase in Pope Clement's Brief of 24.2.1601: "quae tamen legatio nondum ad Nos pervenit."

⁵ The word "kashish" is here used.

⁶ Together with those mentioned by Shah 'Abbas himself in the letter it is obvious that at least four or five embassies were dispatched by the Persian monarch to the Pope and Courts of Europe, made up of Persians and Europeans jointly:

1599. Sir A. Sherley and Husain 'Ali Baig.

Between 1599 1603. One unnamed, mentioned in the Shah's letter, possibly Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig, named below.

1603. Diego de Miranda and Bastam Quli Baig.

1603 4. Fr. Antonio de Gouvea (to Goa) and Allah Virdi Baig.

1604 (from Persia), 1607 (from Astrakhan), Fr. Francisco da Costa left with 'Ali Quli Baig for Rome:

another Persian, unnamed, to the King of Poland accompanying an envoy from Poland.

* There was also returning in 1604-7 from the Court of the Emperor Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig.

⁷ "Frankistan" used in the Persian for Europe.

"Baqir" (the fifth Imam), "the Truth-teller" (i.e. Imam Ja'far us-Sadiq, and the remaining six), "Kazim, Riza, Taqi, Naqi, 'Askari, and Mahdi".

As to Bastam Quli Baig, it is clear from Pope Paul V's Brief dated 8.10.1605 to Shah 'Abbas (Arm. XLV, vol. 1, p. 134) that he died on the journey before reaching Italy "prevented by death he was unable to acquit himself of his embassy" (see text in appendix).

Now that these early Portuguese Religious have been mentioned it is well to note (see the appendix of Latin Briefs) and to bear in mind the correspondence from the Holy See in regard to the Augustinians on the one hand and the Carmelites on the other, because their missions clashed to some extent, and friction came to a head at times. There is no evidence that the dispatch of the former was brought to the notice of, or approved by the Holy See at the time, or that they represented anything more than a move by the viceroy of the Indies to keep in touch with events in view of difficulties at Hurmuz, and by the archbishop of Goa, Primate of the Indies, to extend the limits of his (i.e. a Portuguese) ecclesiastical province, so as to keep missionary activity in the interior of Persia within the appanage of Portuguese Congregations. The third bishop of Isfahan, Mgr Elias of S. Albert, in a letter of 22.8.1695 to the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide, Rome,¹ went so far as to assert that:

"The Portuguese in Goa . . . considering that this mission" (i.e. that of the Carmelites of 1604 from Rome) "would be in their district had time to deliberate over this business, "and to forestall that of the Apostolic See by dispatching the Augustinian Fathers. Vexed "at this, the Supreme Pontiff degraded the General of the Augustinians, until by the intercession of our (Carmelite) Fathers who had arrived there, and by the mediation of "our venerable Fr. Peter of the Mother of God, confessor of His Holiness, the General in "question was restored to favour . . . of all of which we have here" (i.e. in Isfahan) "a "specific account written by the said Fr. John Thaddeus, and, should there be any need of "it for any question, we can transmit certified copies . . ."

In this last assertion, and subsequent recital of steps taken by the Portuguese Augustinians at Isfahan, no reflection on, nor the least disparagement of that ancient and deservedly meritorious Order should be discerned by the reader. Individually those Portuguese members of it then at Isfahan were edifyingly pious in their community life, as the Carmelite Superior will be seen to testify: later, too, in 1642 it will be the Augustinian Prior who was appointed as his Vicar General by the Carmelite Bishop Bernard. Had they been Italians, or Frenchmen, or of any other race by nationality, the situation could never have arisen. But they were Portuguese and *not there as missionaries* of their Order—purely as diplomatists to push the interests of the Portuguese authorities in Hurmuz and Goa, and to act as agents for Portugal—and so it continued: witness the Superior of the Jesuits reporting generally² to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda Fide nearly 150 years later (in 1745):

" . . . est etiam in civitate Conventus Augustiniorum . . . sed isti non sunt proprie missionarii, sed missi a Vice Rege Portugalliae qui residet Goae tanquam consules. . . ."

Doubtless Pope Clement VIII perceived at once that the dispatch of Portuguese Friars on such an errand by the Portuguese Authorities in Goa had a prejudicial side for the wider ecclesiastical interests of the Church; for the Portuguese at Hurmuz were the object of so much bitterness and dislike to Shah 'Abbas I that these Portuguese Augustinians were in a delicate and embarrassing position as clerics from the first: had Portuguese laymen been sent, it would have been better. Then, as diplomatists pushing Portuguese interests, these Portuguese Fathers committed a series of blunders—in seeking to claim religious jurisdiction (which involved a measure of protection) over all the Armenians, and about the consignment of silk to Europe, for instance. By so doing, and by not acting as a brake on Portuguese arbitrary deeds in Hurmuz, they did harm to the whole prospects for Catholicism in Persia.

¹ S.N.R. II, p. 146, letter of 22.8.1695.

² S.N.R. V, p. 360.

For any historian to hide the mistakes of these Portuguese Fathers, as revealed in the reports to Rome here quoted, would be to cloak the truth and one reason why 'Abbas I changed his attitude towards Catholic missionaries, revoked his offer to the Pope.

Meanwhile, during the three and a half years ensuing between the departure of the first Carmelites from Rome in 1604 till their arrival in Persia at the end of 1607, much had happened in the respective military and political situations of Persia and Turkey. War had broken out again, for one thing: for another, the internal situation in Turkey was so disturbed as to put the Ottomans in an inferiority for the time being. In 1605 'Abbas I had attacked both in the Caucasus, i.e. Shirwan, and in Mesopotamia.

According to a letter from Constantinople of 10.6.1606:¹

"The Bustanji² Pasha has crossed to Brusa with his army including 12,000 Janissaries and 8,000 Spahis, in order to march against the Persians . . . it is even rumoured that the Sultan himself in person wants to go, but has remained out of fear lest some rising against him in Constantinople should occur, because before the departure of the said Bustanji Pasha every day there were big uproars and fighting among the Janissaries and Spahis, and many times the Janissaries refused to eat the rations the sovereign gives them . . . and the said Bustanji Pasha has received orders to take troops from every place where he goes, so that altogether it is reckoned that he will be able to engage men up to a total of 40,000. It is said that the Persians are excellently equipped.

"News from Constantinople, 22.6.1606: The rebels against the Sultan in Asia have once more defeated Nasuf Pasha, who with difficulty was able to escape with a few men, the rebels having 20,000 with them. In Persia reinforcements for the forces of the Turks are being constantly demanded, because the enemy is too strong. All the supplies sent are short and insufficient, whether for the Persian front, or for the Hungarian, or against the rebels in question.

"The king of Poland has taken the field with a very extensive army against the Tatars, about which the Sultan will have been informed."³

"Report from Constantinople, 3.12.1606: Asia is ruined to such an extent that all the Qazis have fled . . . and the Persians have captured all Shirwan with the exception of Demirkapu and Shamakha, which they have now besieged. Nasuf Pasha has gone off to recover Aleppo, as he was unable to enter Baghdad, where the rebel" (leader) "having died, the citizens masters of the city have chosen in his stead his son. . . ."⁴

A report by Francis Zaneti of 16.1.1607 spoke of:

"the disobedience of the soldiers of Sultan Ahmad I, who do as they please" . . . "the great risings throughout Asia which is in revolt. . . . Asia is full of rebels, apart from the Persians who by Divine providence have attacked three provinces, i.e. Mesopotamia, that of Tarsus, and the Kurdish chiefs, who have revolted against the Sultan, and gone over to the allegiance of the King of Persia."⁵

"Report from Pera (Constantinople), 24.1.1607: I have reported to you the (loss by) capture of all those strong places which this monarch" (i.e. the Sultan) "had on the frontiers towards Persia, which have been recovered by the Persian (king) in a short space of time, and which the Sultan had won in the space of 15 or 16 years. This winter will decide matters for this year."⁶

"From Constantinople, 8.2.1607: The Tatars promise to make peace with the Persians. It is said that the Persian (king) has taken Baghdad.

"From Constantinople, 9.2.1607: The rebels in Asia have sacked Smyrna."⁷

¹ Fondo Borghese, Ser. IV, p. 316.

² Fondo Borghese, Ser. IV, p. 319.

³ *Idem*, p. 352.

⁴ The Bustanji Bushi was the "Prefect", i.e. governor of Stambul.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 370.

⁶ *Idem*, p. 86.

⁷ *Idem*, p. 353.

Then in cypher:

"From Constantinople, 26.4.1607: On the 1st of this month the Turk"(ish Sultan) "sent off a *chaoush* to the Persian (king) with letters telling the latter to make peace. He "gave orders for the man to be back in 40 days, and that the" (Persian) "ambassador until "the return of the said *chaoush* should be well guarded, and no Christian allowed to go and "see him, for fear lest they tell him the condition of affairs in this empire: and he" (the Sultan) "complains to him that his" (i.e. the Persian) "king has sent ambassadors to the "Christian princes contrary to the (precepts of) their" (Muslim) "religion."¹

Again in cypher, 4.5.1607:

"This will be a full account of the state and present strength of the Sultan . . . which "it has been possible for me to give you in writing before I leave this city for Persia to "go to the king there, who has sent here a man to find out something of the position of "the Sultan, and has taken me as his interpreter.

" . . . And, I shall begin with Asia, saying that it is all in the power of the rebels, not "of one single head among them, but of many who are out in the field, one with 2,000, "another with 3,000, or 4,000 or 6,000 men. The strongest of them is called Tawil, who "has 30,000 men with him, the majority mounted, and he has an understanding with "Jambulat Pasha of Aleppo, Tripoli and Damascus, who is master of all Syria. The Pasha "in question is in league with the Persians. . . . These rebels have become so strong that "they have approached Brusa, and seized all the country-side, even the towns where they "have put their own governors. . . . The Sultan had intended to go with 10 galleys and "pass over 40,000 Tatars from Caffa" (in the Crimea) "to the continent against the Persians; "but the Tatars have broken out in mutiny, besieged Caffa, burning and sacking the "neighbouring villages, and carrying off all they could. . . ."²

Owing to this temporary internal collapse in Turkey and successful warfare by 'Abbas I, singlehanded except for the Hungarian front, where in 1606 the Turks had to offer peace favourable to Austria, the position had, therefore, considerably changed by 1608. Fr. Paul Simon, in the course of his report³ to the Pope after his return to Rome in the latter year, pointed out:

"It is in the hands of Your Holiness at present to establish firmly terms of friendship "with the king of Persia, or to break them. . . . All I can inform Your Holiness is that "the king of Persia is very powerful, and *has no longer need of the Christian Princes* to help "him, because (as he wrote to Your Holiness) he has (got together) so large an army that "it alone suffices to destroy the Turks.

"*He has recovered more than that which his predecessors had lost* and after, 2 years⁴ ago, he "broke the — near Tabriz, the Turks have not sent a single soldier against him, and "so he has made great strides and advances. He is in correspondence and has an under- "standing with the rebels in Turkey, who are in great strength in Baghdad, Egypt, Syria, "Anatolia: and the 2nd June last (1608), when I was at Aleppo, they burnt Smyrna and "went on to Brusa, three days' distance from Constantinople. If the king of Persia "draw near the Mediterranean or Constantinople, he may prove another 'Scourge "of God'" (i.e. Attila) "for Holy Church, because he has the qualities of a soldier of rare "ability and is exceptionally sagacious: it is ill to have a near neighbour so powerful "and withal so irritated. If he were to make peace with the Turks, as the latter have "made the offer several times and on satisfactory terms, it would be the ruin of the East "Indies. . . .

¹ Fondo Borghese, Ser. IV, p. 341.

² *Idem*, pp. 332-3.

³ *Idem*, Ser. II, n. 20.

⁴ In 1606, that is to say.

"If Your Holiness and the Christian princes wish to have him as a friend, he must be given satisfaction in two matters—the one, by (their) making war on the Turks, as they have several times promised,¹ and not lose so fine an opportunity for recovering the Holy Places, as God now offers to Your Holiness. The Turk has no forces left, he cannot resist his own rebels: so how could he stand up against both the King of Persia and Your Holiness? All the Christians in those parts, and they are innumerable—Armenians, Greeks, Maronites and others—ask for help . . . and are ready to take arms once they see a small Christian army backing them: and last year in Cyprus when the fleet of the Grand Duke of Tuscany went there, it was witnessed how all the Greeks rose in our favour. The Patriarch of the Armenians, many archbishops, bishops and others adjured me to beg Your Holiness not to abandon them, and not to lose this opportunity, indicating to me ancient prophecies of their saints whereby the Latin princes were to free them from the Muhammadan bondage. Many of the Turks themselves, on account of the tyranny they suffer, desire that the Christians will go there: they say so openly. . . . God has made Your Holiness, while still young, Head of His holy Church: may He preserve You many years to be useful to it, and keep the peace between the Christian princes. . . . If Your Holiness would organize a Crusade it would remedy many of the inconveniences. . . . The victories which the late Pius V had with his Church are well known. Holy Church is stronger now than then. Italy is at peace with the Christian princes. Many valiant soldiers would like to have the opportunity of shedding their blood for Christ, our Lord. I know of one meeting of 2,000, who made a such-like vow, and spoke to me, as I shall tell Your Holiness verbally: that is like the beginning of a crusade. France, Italy and other countries on account of the long peace are full of sturdy fellows, but vagabonds from being unemployed: and, if Your Holiness will not employ them to make war on the Turks, they may well disturb the peace between the Christian princes, seeing that they have not the wherewithal to live. Certain valorous captains, who had been invited by the Venetians at a very considerable rate of pay to serve against Your Holiness and, being good Christians, did not consent, have told me that they will go to Persia willingly, and seek an opportunity to die for Christ our Lord. If Your Holiness were to realize the commotion there is, without a doubt you would determine to take action, and win an abiding crown of glory in this world and the other life. The other matter in which Your Holiness has to give satisfaction to the king of Persia in order to keep him on terms of amity is to bring about the cessation of the many injuries done to him and to his subjects by the officials of the king of Spain in Hurmuz. . . ."

It was during that campaign of 1604 north of the Araxes in the Cis-Caucasus and Greater Armenia that 'Abbas I perpetrated that cruel crime against the Armenians as Christians and as a race in removing all of them except the aged from the region round Erivan and transplanting them²—some to a new township (also to be called Julfa like that on the bank of the Araxes north of Tabriz) across the Zayandeh Rud at Isfahan, others scattered throughout Gilan—colonies which, save the first, perished, or were engulfed by oppressive Islamic measures that continued throughout the rest of the Safawi dynasty. This was done partly to keep the frontier zone a waste and prevent the Turks making use of the inhabitants, partly with the idea of increasing the silk trade elsewhere in the country. 27,000 families were planted in Gilan

¹ Somewhat tardily for the purposes of 'Abbas I or for an anti-Turk crusading league perhaps—but still in 1608 it should be remembered—Duke Maximilian of Bavaria did make a beginning, with the spiritual electors of the Empire and some Catholic states, for the formation of a Union of Catholic states, and—5.5.1608—in the Imperial Diet at Ratisbon a conference was held on the question and an alliance for the defence of the Catholic Religion and peace with the Empire took shape: and from the time of the Schirmvereinigung at Wurzburg, 10.2.1610, to which all the Imperial States except Austria and Salzburg sent representatives, a "Catholic League" really began, with the Pope and Spain favourably disposed, and Austria definitely enrolled from 1613. But this confederation was to mean only the prelude of the Thirty Years War in Central Europe against the Protestant Union—not the use of that well-drilled Catholic body of 30,000 men, which emerged by 1620, to drive the Turks out of Hungary and the Balkans and Constantinople (see *Catholic Encyclopaedia*).

² " . . . deportait, en usant des violences extremes. . . ." (see *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*: "Arménie").

with the latter object, and most of them perished from weather conditions; 24,000 families in Mazandaran where only a quarter survived, the rest died from the bad climate; "a large number", unspecified, were distributed in the district round Isfahan, and little by little became Muslims for the most part: the most active and well-to-do were established in the site which became known as the new Julfa, which grew rapidly within 10 years, for many came from Armenia seeking a better lot, while the Shah sent there communities of other Christian rites, Nestorians, Jacobite Syrians who enlarged the place with their quarters. (*Vide* MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, Chap. 34, bk. 3, part 2.) To the Carmelites, after they arrived in 1608, the Armenians of the new Julfa constantly asserted that 400,000 of their families had been transplanted by 'Abbas I during the course of the war, and that 10,000 of those families were "Frankish", i.e. Latin, Catholics from the district of Nakhchiwan. They said that in the first overrunning and driving off into captivity by the Persians some 10,000 children and girls had been carried off into Muslim households and the practices of Islam: although the Shah gave orders that the Armenian patriarch and bishops as well as the parents should be permitted to buy back and ransom those Armenian slaves he did not do much to facilitate such a measure, and was suspected of impeding its adoption.

"When he captured the town of Shamakha, and the prisoners captured in it were led 'before him, 'Abbas I selected some for himself, among them being a handsome Armenian 'boy. Two or three times the Shah said to him that he must become a Muslim and, the 'boy refusing, the Shah got angry and drew his sword and gave him a great cut on the 'neck, and others came up and finished him off, as I learnt from several who had been 'present. They showed me the place where the holy martyr was buried outside the town, 'and the Persians said that for many nights they used to see a bright light issuing from 'the tomb.'"¹

So, coming back to the Augustinian Fathers and their proceedings and clash with 'Abbas I,

"The Armenian Patriarch related² that, when the Augustinian Fathers as representatives 'of the king of Spain, arrived in the capital" (i.e. in or about 1604) "the Armenians sur-'passed the rest in manifesting affection, rejoicing, and courtesies. The Shah took this 'amiss, and used it as a pretext for harassing the more the Armenians. . . . The Prior 'of the Augustinians wanted to build a church in Isfahan, with the object of drawing the 'Armenians into unity with the Holy See, as the Patriarch and other bishops of that rite had 'already made a serious promise to that effect in letters which the Prior himself, when he 'went to Rome, had handed to His Holiness."³

Fr. John Thaddeus, in a report to Rome,⁴ gave further details:

"The Prior⁵ of these Fathers came to Persia with *letters from the Archbishop of Goa* for the 'king of Persia, in which the latter was begged to allow the Armenians in his country to 'make obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff, and to that end to give permission for a bishop 'or bishops to go to Rome via India about this business. When the Father (the Prior) 'reached Persia, the king was on the campaign in Shirwan, in the field before Shamakha."⁶

¹ Fr. Paul Simon, narrative, 1608, O.C.D. 234 b.: and Fr. John Thaddeus, report, O.C.D. 237 m., 30.1.1609.

² See *En Persia*, vol. II, p. 107.

³ See on the subject *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, vol. III, Paris, 1930, under "Arménie": ". . . Le Catholikos David IV (1587-1629), prélat ignorant et sans prestige, fut à moitié converti par la charité et les instances des Augustins. Il écrivit au Pape Paul V qu'il reconnaissait sa suprême autorité, et l'infallibilité de l'Eglise Catholique. Avec 6 évêques, 109 prêtres, de nombreux diacres il prononça aussi solennellement une profession de foi Catholique (12 mai 1607). Mais comme les opposants l'accusaient de se mettre sous la domination des princes Latins, il déclara que sa soumission au Pape était subordonnée à l'approbation par Rome de tous les usages Arméniens"—quoted from the French translation of Fr. A. da Gouvea's book cited.

⁴ O.C.D. 236 a., undated, but from its contents written between May 1608 and January 1609.

⁵ Diego de S. Anna was his name in religion.

⁶ This dates the incident to May-June 1607.

"The Prior therefore summoned together the Armenians at Isfahan, and partly by exhortations, partly by more than 1,000 scudi, which he had brought from India, given by the archbishop for the purpose, he drew up a document (asking) for union, and it was signed by a bishop named David and some others, together with many priests and monks. With this letter the Fr. Prior (of the Augustinians) went off to Shamakha where was the Shah, who received him with much courtesy and showed him many marks of honour. The Father told him (the objective of) his deputation, and that he had come so that his (the Shah's) "Armenian Christians should yield obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff. Hearing the name of the Pope mentioned, the Shah replied that he was very pleased. But, when one day the Prior took him, for his signature to be appended, the letter" (i.e. that asking for union with the Holy See) "the king said that in no wise would he do so, and he got very angry with the Father. For some Armenians told him that the Father" (Prior of the Augustinians) "*wanted to make them Portuguese* and deprive them of the Faith they had kept for so many centuries. The king was greatly displeased at this *because of the deep hatred he has for the Portuguese* on account of the onerous impositions they daily in Hurmuz place on his (the Shah's) subjects . . . and so he burst into a rage with the" (Augustinian) "Father in question, and said many nasty things to him, and about the Portuguese that they were the women of the Turks. The Armenians as a result became so terrified and frightened of the king that in future they would not go to the house of the" (Augustinian) "Fathers, nor have intercourse with them as previously: and the king ordered that the (Augustinian) Fathers should take down a small bell which they had over the house, and with which they rang the hours for the Divine Office, saying that they were ringing it 'to summon the Armenians and make us devils'. This was the ruin of the Augustinian Fathers: and so great is the dislike the king has for them that he cannot bear to see them, so much so that, when we arrived, he sent to tell us that, if we were bringing (something) about the business of the Armenians, he did not wish to give us audience. That was the state of mind in which we found the Shah of Persia when we came. Whose is the fault is not known. The Armenians complain against the Augustinians that without any need the latter went and disclosed the business" (of the union with the Holy See) "to an infidel monarch . . ."

There is a slight variant of this incident in the report of the other Carmelite, Father Paul Simon:¹ when the Augustinian Prior made his *faux pas*, 'Abbas I used:

"other words which showed scant respect for the king of Spain: and so the Father was obliged to leave without obtaining anything. In Tabriz it was told the king that the Augustinian Fathers had put up a bell in their church" (i.e. in Isfahan) "and that for this reason there were many people sick in that town. The Shah bit his finger, muttering two or three times: 'Church with a bell! church with a bell!': and gave orders that they should immediately take it down, as they did. In many other actions he ('Abbas) demonstrated the small goodwill he had for Christians: and this increased to such an extent that, when we arrived in the city of Isfahan, he had given instructions for publication of an edict to the effect that all 'Frankish' Christians (in this term they include Christians of the Latin rite) and the Augustinian Fathers should quit his realm. . . ."

" . . . The cause of so great a change that we found in this monarch God alone knows: the (Augustinian) Fathers say that in the beginning the king was merely pretending and that those demonstrations" (of affection and goodwill) "did not come from his heart. Other people attribute it to the many causes for annoyance the officials of his (Catholic) Majesty in Hurmuz have given him, of which mention will be made elsewhere: to the Christian princes, His Holiness, the Emperor, the king of Spain not having kept the word they had given to various ambassadors that they would make war on the Turks, when

¹ O.C.D. 234 b.

"they exhorted him himself to do the same, as he in fact has done:¹ to many of the Franks, "who had gone to his country, having committed a great many follies.² and, more recently "still, to the Emperor having agreed to treat of peace between himself and the Turks,³ "without giving him" ('Abbas) "notice, the more so as he at that time had ambassadors "with the Emperor, of whom he" ('Abbas) "had no news, but believed that the Emperor "had had them killed. Certain it is that the Mullahs—this the name they give in their "tongue to the learned men of their belief—went to the Shah, and told him to reflect on "what he was doing—that he knew very well that the Sultan was the head of the Muslim "belief: if he" ('Abbas I) "should bring about the destruction of the latter in this warfare, "the Christians would do the same to him, and to all of their belief. For they observed "what poor sort of friends they were, when even their kings did not keep their word to "him" ('Abbas), "while, the Franks who came to his country, what scant respect they paid "him. It would be better to make peace with the Turkish Sultan, and then both of them "together to attack the Christians. . . ."

The incidents on Hurmuz, to which reference was made above as so prejudicing 'Abbas I against the Portuguese, are recounted in another portion of Fr. Paul Simon's report preserved in the Vatican:⁴

"The Captains of Hurmuz in the presence of the vassals of the Shah of Persia speak very "insultingly of him, saying infamous things, which for decency I omit. They force the "Persian traders who go to buy merchandize at Hurmuz to take other goods, which they "do not want, at a price of 60 per cent above what these are worth in the market: for "example, a man goes to Hurmuz with 1,000 scudi to buy cloth. The Captain takes his "money, and gives him cloves or other merchandize of his own, which afterwards the "traders are unable to sell in their countries: and they force them to take these (goods) "at much more than they are worth in the market. Unable to stomach such tyranny, one "trader burnt in front of the fortress the goods which the Captain had forced on him. "They take away forcibly the horses, which traders bring down from Persia,⁵ and pay "them what they (the Portuguese) choose—very much less than the prices at which they "want to sell. This is what they do in Hurmuz to Persian traders: it is nothing in com- "parison with what they do to the Armenians, who also are subjects of the king of Persia, "and who many times have complained to me, saying that the Portuguese are not Chris- "tians, but Jews, because they rob them (the Armenians) openly and shamelessly. "When I was coming away from Persia to Aleppo many Muhammadans, without knowing "who I was, made complaints to me of the same thing, to the great shame of our holy "Faith, saying that in Hurmuz the Captain had 'killed and ruined' them, because the "goods he had obliged them to take, e.g. for 6,000 scudi, they had not sold for 3,000. To "such an extent these impositions grew that the traders ceased to go to Hurmuz to make "purchases, but waited for the shipments in Basra, or caravans to arrive in Shiraz, and there "they would make purchases, although at higher prices, preferring to pay that much more

¹ In another of Fr. Paul Simon's reports on his return to Rome, 1608, preserved in the Carmelite archives, O.C.D. 234 b., these words are used:

"He" (i.e. the Shah) "complains that . . . the Pope, Emperor and king of Spain have incited him with various "embassies to declare war against the Sultan, promising to aid him by doing the same. At their request he had done "so, and had not ceased from that hour. Yet in so many years the Christian princes had not made a move: on the "contrary, with two of his (Persian) envoys at his Court the Emperor had allowed peace to be negotiated between "himself and the Sultan, and concluded it without giving him ('Abbas) any news of it. Thus, says the Shah, the Christian "princes have cheated, and made a mock of him. . . . This French king sent him an ambassador with letters in which "he adjured him ('Abbas) to continue the war against the Turkish Sultan, and promised to do the same. When the "Shah returned the gesture by sending an envoy to France, the King of France did not give him audience, they say, "and would not even receive him. . . ."

² This refers to Da Costa, Miranda, and the like up to the Augustinians.

³ This was the peace at Szeveorsik in 1606 when the Turks waived the former annual tribute by Austria.

⁴ Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, p. 163.

⁵ Interesting to note that the export of Persian ponies from the Gulf Ports existed already in 1600, as it flourished still in 1910 (for polo in India) but not much later.

"than to go to Hurmuz, where they risked losing everything. Perceiving this, the Captain (of Hurmuz) sent after them, promising in writing not to force them to make purchases, nor to burden them with imposts. Trusting in his word, they returned (to Hurmuz). Later (they say), he did not keep to it: for which reason not only officials from the Indies and Portuguese, but all Franks, who till then had been esteemed men of their word and greatly respected for it in those parts have remained dishonoured in the eyes of Muslims and pagan heathen. With these and like complaints Persians and Armenians are daily going wailing to the Shah of Persia, and to the Khan of Shiraz, his 'captain-general', to whom for that reason two or three times the king issued orders not to allow caravans to pass, or ships coming from Hurmuz. In the Customs¹ at Hurmuz they cuff and knife vassals of the king of Persia, and without any cause killed a servant and relative of a Persian ambassador, who was on his way to the king of Spain, just because, as he went on horseback, he knocked against a Portuguese soldier, the road being narrow: forthwith the soldier thrust him through. They did not punish the murderer, who after a few days was walking about openly. The king of Persia resented this greatly, and told the Augustinian Fathers in Persia that they should have the soldier in question surrendered to him so that he could have him executed. They (the Fathers) replied that the Captain of Hurmuz was unable to do so, because the man had taken asylum with the Church. The Shah was indignant at this answer, ascribing it to their having small regard for himself, and said: 'I should like to have the Franks, who come to my realms, killed and let the murderers take refuge in the mosques'."²

"There is an ancient custom, based on a favour, which the kings of Portugal followed in respect to the Shahs of Persia, out of the friendly regard which they professed for them, viz.: things which used to come from India for the use of the household of the King of Persia were free of Customs."³

"The king ('Abbas) complains that in Hurmuz in this matter they have subjected him to many insults and shown him scant respect, even breaking open and trampling under foot declarations under his own seal, in which he certified that the goods contained were for his own use:⁴ and this in the presence of his own servants, and with unseemly words. The Captain of Hurmuz did not want to allow in for him (the Shah) free of duty a present which the Mogul Emperor was sending him, and detained it in the Customs for the payment of duty, saying that it was not for the Shah. The Persian king learnt of this, and gave orders to his agents to leave it" (adding) "that he would go and 'redeem' it. Some months passed, and then the Captain had it sold publicly to meet the Customs duties. The Augustinian Fathers have told me that the Captain of Hurmuz knew that the present was for the King of Persia; but he acted in that way, because in *his* time of office⁵ the king had *deprived him of the island of Bahrain, which fell within his* (the Captain's) *sphere of government*, and brought him much (wealth) from the pearl fishery there is there: and that that was the cause of the other disagreeable things he" (the Captain) "did to the Shah.

"What the King of Persia most resents is that, when ships arrive in Hurmuz from India, they (the Portuguese) take away from the merchants, his vassals, the heathen or Muhammadan boys and girls, whom some of them have purchased there for the king's service, under the pretext of ascertaining their" (the children's) "desires, whether they wish to become Christians. They" (the Portuguese) "put them" (the children) "in a convent, where by force of harsh treatment, and beatings (so the Shah says) they make

¹ Note that even this small island boasted a Customs-house as early as 1600, and doubtless previously.

² The custom of "bast"—asylum for a criminal, or fugitive from pursuit, under the shadow of a cannon; in the Shah's stables; in greater mosques and shrines; was, however, well established in Persia (as it had been in Europe in the Middle Ages) in the next century, even if 'Abbas professed not to recognize and tolerate it.

³ and ⁴ Early examples in the East of recognized Customs exemption from duty, and of "certified declarations". But how many monarchs in 1600 or later humbled themselves to make and sign their own affidavits?

⁵ This dates the seizure of the Bahrain Islands from Portuguese control by Shah 'Abbas' satellites to in or about 1599-1604.

"them Christians: and, although it be not all true, the Augustinian Fathers in Persia and other Portuguese worthy of credence have told me that there are failings in this respect because of the too indiscreet zeal of some Religious among those charged with looking after them. The king of Persia has got to know of this and told us that Father So-and-so beats such-and-such a child, because it did not want to become a Christian, and other trifles of all of which the king gets to know through the many spies he has in Hurmuz. Some of these children—I do not know whether out of the fear they had of the Fathers, or because of their unwillingness to become Christians—threw themselves down out of the windows of the convent and were killed, others after being baptized apostatized. This and the other (matters) mentioned above greatly irritate the king, who by temperament is haughty, but all the more so now with the many victories he has won, and rightly resents that a private nobleman (such as are the Captains of Hurmuz) should want to cross swords with him, and in public boast of causing him annoyance.

"The good treatment and favouritism afforded the Franks by the king of Persia is the more marked because, notwithstanding what the Christian princes have said to him, and (notwithstanding) the injuries inflicted on his people in Hurmuz, he has never allowed the slightest injustice to be done to our merchants on their way overland to India, nor has he lost the respect he used to pay to Franks who came to his country, where some of them, and Italians too, have caused no small scandal, and committed many follies, such as to get drunk and when drunk to dash about the main square (Maidān) at a gallop, striking this and that Persian, and killing one or other of them, of which the city of Isfahan made complaint to the king—all the same the king did not wish them to be condemned (to death) because they were Franks, although he is very severe with his own people, even when they be governors and nobles of the realm. . . ."

"The respect, which on account of Your Holiness the king shows to Christians in his country is so great that they can do whatsoever they like without even the great governors laying hands on them: when it concerns Franks all remain silent, unless they" (the Franks) "force the harams, where they (the Persians) keep their women, when in such case they would not spare even the king himself, in Persia the saraglio being revered as if it were sacred. Everything else the Persians will suffer at the hands of Franks, because his Majesty so wills it. Now, when the king of Persia sees Christians in Hurmuz treating his subjects so differently, the wrongs they do him rankle the more. . . . I have not myself witnessed such conduct, but have heard of it, partly from the king of Persia (who has bidden me to recount it and write of it to Your Holiness, begging you to put an end to it), partly from the Augustinian Fathers in Persia, the Portuguese and Franks worthy of credence, who have testified of it to me as eyewitnesses, partly from Muhammadans and Armenians, who have suffered the injuries indicated and complained of them to me. . . ."

Here, then, lies much of the incentive which led, sixteen years later, to the successful attack on Hurmuz island, of which 'Abbas I reaped the fruits though it was foreign naval assistance which made it successful.

The preceding pages should have served to give the reader an accurate idea of the confused state of affairs when the Carmelite mission was launched into Persia.

* * * * *

* * * *

The tale of the disastrous journey through Muscovy of the pioneer band of Discalced Carmelites has been told briefly in *Histoire de l'Etablissement de la Mission de Perse par les Pères Carmes Déchaussés, 1604-12*, by Fr. Berthold-Ignace de Ste. Therese (Bruxelles, 1885), and at greater length—for it takes 60 out of the 150 pages of the second volume—in the sprightly

Spanish account, which follows closely the reports of the missionaries but does not go beyond 1622, by Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus in *A Persia* (Pamplona, 1929): here therefore only the main incidents will be noticed.

Once Clement VIII had determined on the dispatch of Carmelite Fathers, there was little delay in the selection of the components of the mission and, perhaps logically, those who had been foremost in influencing the Congregation of Italy to embark on such enterprise were included. They were: Fr. Paul of Jesus Mary and Fr. John of S. Elisaeus, already named, Fr. Vincent of S. Francis, a second Spaniard but from Valencia who had made his profession in Rome, and Lay Brother John of the Assumption from Umbria. A fifth and lay member of the party was the Aragonese, Francisco Riodolid de Peralta,¹ a soldier by profession, described variously as "Ensign" and "Sergeant-Major", who had served for many years with the Spanish forces in Flanders: in the words of the leader of the mission:

"... this Spanish gentleman was being sent by the Pope to see whether it would be expedient to send military engineers, and other men-at-arms, for whom the king was asking his Holiness, with the object of their aiding him against the Turks by training good soldiers, and in order that, in case it should be expedient to send them, Riodolid should see what class of engineers and men-at-arms he (the king of Persia) needed..."²

Funds for the journey were partly furnished by the Baron de Cacurri. They were given letters of recommendation from the Pope for the Emperor, for Sigismund III, king of Poland, for the Grand Duke Feodor of Muscovy, and for Shah 'Abbas I (as already noted in the registers of the Vatican archives). The Latin of the last-mentioned Brief is provided in the appendix: a translation runs:

"Pope Clement VIII to the king of the Persians,

"Most puissant and illustrious king, greeting and the light of the Divine grace. The warlike valour of Your Highness is so renowned in the mouths of all, in public and in private, that though the rascally Turk, Your enemy no less than Ours, may have closed all approaches, it is the subject of the talk of all. These are the gifts of God, granted to Your Highness for some hidden reason by the Author of all good things. And We consider that You are given to the world for the sake both of the State and of some great advantage that the dignity and extent of Your most powerful kingdom may be restored to its ancient condition by Your valour.

"We indeed are separated by a very great distance of space from You; but in accordance with that honour which is due to Your distinguished valour We have for You a friendly and benevolent regard and wish for You those results of the war that may duly hand down to the memory of men Your glory already known and witnessed by all. Since We greatly desire to have tried men worthy of confidence with You as an earnest of this Our favourable goodwill towards You, We have chosen from the Carmelite Order three pious and learned priests, whom We send to You together with their companions, namely Paul Simon, John Thaddeus and Vincent.

"These Our letters they will hand to Your Highness and congratulate You in Our name on Your royal city that You have regained,³ on so many and so great victories, on Your illustrious renown which carries Your name in triumph throughout the whole world to the applause and admiration of all. If this mark of this Our benevolent goodwill towards Your Highness be, as We hope, agreeable to You, You will learn from these men of Ours also other matters, which in time will be even more agreeable to You and We ask that You will have confidence, in still greater fashion, in all matters which they will

¹ On p. 43 of the first volume of the registers of professions of Religious at S. Maria della Scala, Rome, as one witness to the state of the novice, the Spaniard Leander of the Annunciation, himself a former captain in the army, appears the signature of Francisco Riodolid de Peralta, 16.3.1604.

² Vide p. 18, *A Persia*, cited.

³ Probably Tabriz is intended.

"lay before You by Our command: and We implore for You those things which are useful and salutary for You and for Your subjects.

"Given at Rome, at S. Peter's, under the ring of the Fisherman, the 30th June, 1604, "in the 13th year of Our Pontificate."

His Holiness was careful to add for the Augustinian Hermits already in Isfahan a recommendation to work in harmony with his Carmelite delegates (Arm. XLIV, 56, p. 423, formerly 430):

"To Our beloved sons Antonio de Govea and Christopher and Jerome of the Cross of the Order of Hermits of S. Augustine sojourning in Persia.

"Beloved sons, greetings and the Apostolic benediction. The news about your Christian piety sent from your land to Us by everyone's discourse causes Us so great spiritual joy that at this time there is nothing in which We more delight in the Lord or which more concerns all the bowels of Our love. Blessed be God for whose glory you endure so many labours and have gone to so remote lands to build in honour of His name new temples whose tops reach to heaven. To you beloved sons We are ever present with the reciprocal love that binds Us one to the other and are mindful of your ministry continually in Our sacrifices which We desire to be helped by your prayers also. Right widespreading is the field you have wherein as in a holy racecourse you mightily exert yourselves. Wherefore you should strive and exert yourselves with all your might to conquer, for it is not one day's reward that is set before you such that as soon as men's speech is hushed forth-right passes away, but a lasting crown with which those who have lawfully striven are crowned. But since great hope is shown of a yet more bounteous harvest even though you workers are very few, We have considered it needful to give you besides some new workers to plant sow reap with you and also to bring forth most welcome fruits to the Lord in the unity of the Spirit. Since therefore We have sent you in the preceding days pious and learned men of the Carmelite Order Paul Simon, John Thaddaeus and Vincent together with companions, We beg you through the bowels of the mercy of our God who redeemed Us in the blood of His Son Jesus Christ, that with a united and harmonious will you so conduct and labour at the cause of the Catholic religion in that land that herein especially all may know you are disciples of Christ if you have love towards one another. He who loves his brother remains in the light and cause of offence is not in him. Now if these two things be rightly attended to undoubtedly by God's favour you can bring over the greatest number possible from impious superstition to the practice and holy system of the Christian life. Therefore since it is in the reciprocal unity of your souls that your own and your Kingdom's salvation especially lies, bring it about that that which you can easily keep unharmed by your agreement perish not by your disagreement; and remember you are ministers of an eternal judge from whom naught is hid but in whose eyes all things are naked and open. Although We hope you will be united among yourselves, yet that you may be so the more in the Lord, We gather you one after another in Our Apostolic benediction; and lest aught of this holy bond of love be loosed, We enjoin upon you all in virtue of the obedience you owe Us that you all equally watch its safe keeping.

"Given in Rome at S. Peter's under the Fisherman's Ring, 4th February, 1605, in the "13th year of Our Pontificate."

Other letters of recommendation were furnished by the Cardinals Aldobrandino and Cinthius¹ (the Pope's nephews) by the Procurator General of the Augustinians, while the Commissary-General of the Discalced Carmelites himself wrote, 20.8.1604, to 'Abbas I "by direction of His Holiness, and as Superior of the Religious dispatched":

¹ Cinthius Passero Aldobrandini, Cardinal Deacon of S. Giorgius in Velabro.

On

"Sunday, after Vespers, the 4th July 1604, they went to receive the blessing and kiss "the feet of the Pontiff at the Quirinal Palace: Clement VIII conversed with them for a "good while, and it was his wish that the two senior Fathers should add to their names "in religion those of the Apostles in Persia, S. Simon and S. Thaddaeus, thus becoming "Fr. 'Paul Simon' and Fr. 'John Thaddeus' respectively."¹

After discussion with the Commissary-General of the Carmelites, the Pope turned to the Fathers with the colloquial expression:

"Or su!—Well then! Fathers, Will you go to Persia? You want to undertake this "journey and emprise?" To which the Fathers answered: "Holy Father, yes." Then said he once more: "Or su!—Go, and God bless you as I bless you: and I hope that "you will make a great harvest, as I shall always be begging the Lord: because We have "good hopes, seeing that the king there shows goodwill and does not abhor our Catholic "religion, even taking pleasure in speaking about it."

The Pope bestowed the triple benediction, and they kissed his foot and withdrew. On the 6th July they renewed their religious profession and took three further vows—in addition to the general vows of obedience, chastity, poverty: (a) to go wherever ordered by competent authority; (b) to embrace death valiantly, if so required in confession of their Faith; (c) to receive and keep no gold, silver, precious stones, nor the like unless in case of extreme need, then as certified by their proper superior: and they quitted Rome on that same 6th July, 1604.

Apart from the protracted sea voyage with the Portuguese fleet, which in those days set out from Lisbon once a year for Goa, a route which perhaps for other and political reasons was thought inexpedient, there lay before them as alternatives that *via* Alexandretta, Aleppo, Baghdad and Isfahan, and the longer northerly journey by way of Poland and Muscovy: and, because of the state of war prevailing between Persia and Turkey at the time, as well as the lawless conditions arising out of the revolt in Syria, the matter was decided for the missionaries by the Vatican authorities selecting that latter alternative, unwisely as was to be experienced.

Travelling by Loreto, Venice, Trent and Prague (arrival August 1st 1604), and everywhere accorded marked attention and hospitality by the ecclesiastical authorities, cardinals, various bishops and religious communities, received in audience by the Emperor Rudolf, then already reigning for 28 years past, at Prague, where they found the Persian envoy, Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig, the Carmelites reached, 25.8.1604, Cracow, capital of the Polish king Sigismund III, to whom they were presented by the Nuncio, Monsignor Rangoni, on August 29th, and who granted them a gracious welcome and through the papal representative proffered a substantial donation towards their travelling expenses, declined like other gifts of money from the Cardinal of Cracow, Nuncio and nobles, as they wrote to the Pope. On their departure, 13.9.1604, they were accompanied for two miles by the Cardinal Primate Mokiouski in his coach, and he then insisted on sending them on by carriage to Vilna: he moreover wrote to Rome begging the Order to found a convent of the Discalced Carmelites in Poland, and sent a large parchment book as a gift for the king of Persia: it contained four pictures on each page illustrating the Old Testament from Genesis to the Book of Kings.

At Vilna, 23.9.1604, the Carmelites went to find the "grand chancellor" of Lithuania, and were warned by him that the turmoil and civil war in Muscovy might render their forward progress difficult. For they had reached the frontier of Great Russia at a critical period in Russian history. Ivan "Grozni", the "Terrible", who had absorbed and annexed Siberia, Astrakhan and the lands of the Tatars, had died in 1584: his elder son Feodor had succeeded: a younger son, Dmitri, was deemed to have been murdered in 1591 at the instigation of Boris

¹ Much of the following abstract is taken from *A Persia*, cited, which quotes Fr. Paul Simon's account of the Russian experiences.

Godounov, brother of the Tsarina Irene and all-powerful minister of Tsar Feodor, who had died, or was murdered—apparently the last of his dynasty, in 1598. Then Boris Godounov had himself proclaimed Tsar, only to be confronted by a pretender, who claimed to be Dmitri and to have escaped by a ruse the generally assumed assassination of 1591. This “prince” Dmitri by 1604 had invaded Muscovite territory at the head of some 30,000 Poles and Cossacks, and marched against Tsar Boris Godounov: he relied much on Polish support, was known to be well disposed towards the Catholic Faith, and had in fact promised to introduce it into Muscovy, having Jesuits and Franciscans in his train.

When therefore the little Carmelite band, who left Vilna in the guise of chaplains and part of the entourage of an envoy, who was being dispatched by the “grand chancellor” of Lithuania to Tsar Boris, crossed from the Polish frontier town of Polocia on 4.12.1604, it was to find themselves held up by the “palatine” of the district of Novalia who, informed that the Carmelites were being sent by the Pope to the Shah of Persia, after detaining them for a fortnight, signified to them by instructions of the Tsar Boris that, as coming from the territory of king Sigismund of Poland, whose support of the pretender Dmitri he resented, they would not be allowed to continue on their journey. As a concession, however, and act of courtesy towards Pope Clement VIII, Tsar Boris would admit them into Muscovy by Ivangorod, on the gulf of Finland, or Archangel on the White Sea.

Retracing their steps to Polocia the Carmelites there passed Christmas, then they went back to Vilna, 1.1.1605, and thence to Warsaw where the Polish Diet was convoked; and with the Nuncio and others it was planned to change the route of the Religious to one across the Black Sea, and so to Georgia and Armenia. But hardly had they set out with the Court, at the conclusion of the Diet, on its return to Cracow early in March than the Cardinal Primate learnt of the death of Pope Clement VIII, and therefore they waited in Cracow to learn the issue of the two conclaves, which followed in quick succession, and from the second of which Cardinal Borghese issued, 17.5.1605, as Pope, and began his long and important reign as Paul V.

The new Pontiff lost no time in giving the expedition his support and addressing to the three Carmelite Religious in July 1605 a Brief worded as follows (Arch. Sec. Vat. Arm. XLV, 1, p. 50 (formerly 39)):

“POPE PAUL V

“to Our beloved sons Paul Simon, John Thaddaeus and Vincent, Carmelite Brothers.

“Beloved sons, greetings and the Apostolic benediction. Our beloved son Peter of the “Mother of God of your family of Carmelites has brought Us word how exceedingly “long, difficult and peril-fraught a travel into Persia you have eagerly undergone by the “command of Our predecessor Pope Clement VIII, whose memory is blessed, in order “that you may fulfil the Lord’s precept by which when about to return to the Father He “bade His holy Apostles go forth into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every “creature. And indeed, beloved sons, you have entered upon a province worthy of your “piety and the wont of the higher life you profess, so that in that province you have been “able with much interest to trade with the talent of love you received from the Lord. “Assuredly you cannot do a work more grateful to Us, since naught is dearer to Us than “the salvation of souls and the increase of the glory of the divine Name. And so We “wished to write to you that you might understand how pleasing and delightful to Us is “this spiritual business of yours and to urge you to the speedier completion of the course “you have begun and to the fulfilling of this holy Apostolic ministry with the greatest “courage care and love, in order that as soon as possible God’s church may get rich fruits “from your so many and great labours. And that you may go forward more easily and “freely and in addition that We may honour this praiseworthy travelling abroad of yours “with some special favour so that you may the more be able to infer Our fatherly good- “will towards you, firstly We impart to you Our Apostolic benediction; in the next place

"We impart grant and bestow on you by tenor of these presents by Our Apostolic authority "all and each of the privileges faculties favours and indulgences that have hitherto been "vouchsafed by the Supreme Pontiffs or else that are usually vouchsafed to those who "are sent by the Apostolic See to turn the souls of the infidels to the faith of Jesus Christ "our Redeemer, and in particular to the Dominican friars. We grant to you that it be "allowed each of you, namely you Paul Simon, John Thaddaeus and Vincent to choose "3,000 chaplets or rosaries and as many crucifixes and statues whether made by painting "or by bronze or metal stamped, to all of which We give and grant the same indulgences "and blessings and graces which hitherto We granted to the chaplets images and crucifixes "which We blessed in accordance with the prayers of Our beloved son the noble "Marquis de Villena the Ambassador at Our Court of Our dear son the Catholic king. "On then! with rejoicing and spiritual joy, that you may bear fruit and your fruit may "remain to the glory of Almighty God and the increase of Holy Church; and also that "you may receive the reward of your labours from the eternal Father of our family who "is rich in mercy and rewards abundantly the labourers in His vineyard. Meanwhile We "by Our prayers shall pray that all things be favourable and propitious for you from the "only begotten Son of God who made His journey from the Father's bosom to earth that "He might redeem the human race from the wickedness of sin and make it partake of "His eternal inheritance.

"Given in Rome at S. Mark's under the ring of the Fisherman, 20th July 1605, in the "first year of Our Pontificate."

The Pope also enjoined on the Augustinian Hermits in Isfahan friendly collaboration with the Carmelites sent out at his predecessor's instance, writing on the following day, 21.7.1605, to them, the senior of whom was afterwards bishop of Cyrene, Fr. Antonio de Govea (Arch. Sec. Vat. Arm. XLV, 1, p. 51 (formerly 40):

"POPE PAUL V

"to Our beloved sons Brothers of the Order of Hermits of S. Augustine staying with the "king of the Persians.

"Beloved sons, greetings and the Apostolic benediction. We bade Paul Simon, John "Thaddaeus and Vincent priests of the Carmelite family who came into Persia by the "order of Our predecessor Pope Clement VIII (whose memory be blessed) that they should "hasten their journey they had begun, for We understand that the harvest indeed is ready "indeed in plenty but the labourers are few. Accordingly, as to the brethren on their way "to you, We wish firstly that you receive them with brotherly love according to the Lord's "command; and next that you aid these traders in the Lord's talent with all that is need- "ful: advice labour influence and favour. In this way you will have performed your "duty and at the same time have done a thing especially pleasing to Us; and you will "receive abundantly a reward from God the Father of mercies. But that you may more "easily attain this We bless you with Our Apostolic blessing.

"Given in Rome at S. Mark's under the Fisherman's Ring, 21st July 1605, in the first "year of Our Pontificate."

In October of the same year he also wrote to Shah 'Abbas I, commending the three Carmelite Religious in the following terms (Arch. Sec. Vat. Arm. XLV, 1, p. 134 (formerly 123):

"POPE PAUL V

"to the illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas, king of the Persians.

"Illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas, king of the Persians, greetings and the light "of the truth. Most pleasing was it to Us in that—when in the past months We wrote to

"Your royal Highness and intimated that by the Divine goodness so ordering it We by "undoubtedly no merits of Our own were set over the inviolable and sacred Apostolic "See of Blessed Peter prince of the Apostles; and that We love You no less than did the "most holy Pontiff Clement VIII (whom God called to heavenly rewards after long and "weighty labours for Holy Church); and that We rejoice over Your most splendid triumphs "which We understand You daily gain over Our mutual enemy the most frightful despot "the Turk—in that at this time there have come to Our hands Your letters which You "wrote to Our predecessor most duteously. Clearly had it been announced to Us that Your "royal Highness honours the Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Christian Church with "great regard and that Your duteousness to Christian men is unique; but both facts We "have learned much more evidently from this letter of Yours: so duteously, so politely, "so kindly have you shown Us Your outstanding reverence to Us and also Your love to "Our men. Wherefore Our affection towards Your Highness is wonderfully increased, "and the more do We seek from God almighty by Our prayers that He vouchsafe to "enlighten with the Light of His wisdom Your mind; increase in You and also Your "generals and soldiers strength resources courage, in order that You may gain from day to "day more brilliant victories. And indeed We could have wished that Your noble ambas- "sador Bastam Quli Baig had come safe to Us and that he had experienced Our far from "conventional affection, but because being anticipated by death he could not complete "his embassy We must bear it patiently. However as often as You shall send any of Your "men to Us We shall welcome them right kindly and treat them right courteously, that "from this very thing itself You may understand how highly We rate Your friendship and "kindness and how acceptable to Us are all the favours You continually show to Christian "men. Now though We do understand that these have received from You constant "kindnesses, still We do urgently entrust them to You as Our dearest sons whose souls' "salvation is beyond all things dear to Us. For this reason we ordered that a certain "number of priests, Religious of the Congregation of the Carmelites, namely Paul Simon, "John Thaddaeus and Vincent whom Pope Clement VIII, Our predecessor of happy "memory, was sending to Persia to comfort the souls of the faithful who live there, were "to complete as soon as possible the journey undertaken by them and to bring Our letter "to Your royal Highness, and also at the same time in a greater number of words make "plain to You Our love. Meanwhile We urge You to be disposed to cherish this friend- "ship of Ours by an increase of love and to augment it. We however by whatever ways "We can be of use and pleasure to You will cheerfully expend Our influence pains and "labour on Your royal Highness; particularly though shall We by Our prayers constantly "pray God that by the right hand of His might He will make Your power and strength "greater against the enemies of Our holy faith and lead You into the way of salvation.

"Given in Rome at S. Mark's under the Fisherman's Ring, 8th October 1605, in the "first year of Our Pontificate."

A Brief issued four months later, 14.2.1606 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 1, p. 239), was in identical terms with the foregoing, except that the final sentences ran:

"And since We heartily like You, and are extraordinarily delighted with Your victories "and triumphs, We trust, when the strength of the most savage Ottoman tyrant has been "worn down and crushed by you, that Your very extensive realms and the whole Christian "commonwealth would be freed for a time from invasion by the common and cruel enemy; "so pressingly We beg of You to persevere more keenly and more forcibly day to day "drive forward in this war, no less necessary for You and for Us than advantageous. We "indeed with the greater energy and determination of which We are capable are making "a stand against the Turks, We are rousing all Christian princes, We point out (to them) "the opportunity of waging the war favourably and successfully, while our enemies are "being strongly attacked by You, and at the same time in Our prayers We constantly

"beseech God with the right hand of His might to increase Your strength and power
"against the assailant of our Faith and to guide You into the way of salvation.

"Given at Rome at S. Peter's, under the Fisherman's Ring, 6th Kalends of March 1606,
"and in the first year of Our Pontificate."

Another event of magnitude was the death, on 23.4.1605, of Tsar Boris Godounov, who while giving public audience to a Danish envoy suddenly broke a blood vessel. The nobles sent for Dmitri, who made his triumphal entry into Moscow as Tsar of 'Black Russia' 20.6.1605. This last change in the political situation determined the Carmelites to abandon their project of proceeding via the Crimea and Black Sea, and to return to the original route traced for them, since they hoped much of the known patronage of Catholics by Dmitri. There was talk of a marriage between Dmitri and a daughter of the Catholic 'Palatine' of Sandomir, at which the Cardinal Primate was to be legate *a latere*: and it was in the company of that 'Palatine' of Sandomir and of the nephew of the Nuncio, sent to congratulate Dmitri, that the Carmelites left Cracow finally, 29.11.1605. At Smolensk, where a great reception was given to the party and where they passed Christmas, the Carmelites suffered terribly from the extreme cold of that Russian winter, being clad merely in their ordinary habits; and all of them were ill. They were afterwards sent forward by the 'Palatine' to ascertain in what form he was to enter Moscow. Arrived in the capital, they lodged with the Jesuit Fathers attached to Dmitri, whom Fr. Paul Simon found to be

"of about 24 years of age, excellent physique, subtle intellect, ready memory, with ambition
"for fame, manly in courage and danger, very choleric at the first outset, broadminded in
"negotiation, changeable. He had not a man of any worth near his person: all who
"surround him are Poles. . . . The Muscovites are but little loyal to the Prince. In the
"time we have been here there have been many plots against him. . . ."¹

The Orthodox episcopate were opposed to the marriage of Dmitri with a Latin, and refused to attend. When the Carmelites went to take leave of him in March he gave them the choice of going on at once with Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig (who had also come on from Prague) or of waiting to accompany Russian envoys, whom he was about to send to compliment Shah 'Abbas; and, when they opted for the former course, he gave them furs for the journey, and provided them with horse-drawn sledges. Via Nijni Novgorod they reached Kazan, 2.4.1606, where the governor (who had been in Rome in the time of Gregory XIII and Sixtus V) in private was kindly, but publicly placed sentinels on the door of their dwelling and did not allow Fr. Paul Simon and Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig to go out. There they received the news of the assassination on 17.5.1606, the day of his marriage, of Dmitri, the soi-disant Grand Duke, by a certain Basil Shuiski, whose band proceeded to slaughter the Poles; and of the recognition of Basil as Grand Duke. Fanned by the Orthodox Holy Synod, there was a great reaction in popular feeling against the Pope and Catholics for having tried to foist Dmitri and their rite on the Russian nation. Informed of threats against them, the Carmelites felt that their lives were at stake, the governor refusing to allow them to proceed further without special sanction from the new Grand Duke. In these circumstances Fr. Paul Simon had the courage to write an energetic letter of protest to Basil himself, and it was duly forwarded: on 20.7.1606 there arrived from Moscow Russian envoys, whom the Grand Duke Basil was dispatching to 'Abbas I, and they sent for the Carmelites to inform them that, despite the ill that the Pope had done him in aiding the "heretic" Dmitri, which deserved that his missionaries should not be allowed to pass, of his clemency and desire to maintain the former good relations with Rome the new Grand Duke permitted them to leave Kazan, and gave orders for provisions to be supplied them. So, 24.7.1606, they left by a boat on the Volga—in their flotilla there were some 3,000 persons, including 500 soldiers—and took 27 days to reach Tsaritsin, then "a village of 100 houses"; but there the Russian envoys ordered that the

¹ This letter was of 15.3.1606.

convoy should halt, because a serious revolt against the new Grand Duke Basil had broken out, with the Cossacks supporting 'sons' of the former Tsar Feodor. Astrakhan had from the beginning refused to recognize Basil, and the latter had sent a force of 20,000 men to subjugate the place: fighting was in progress. Then in September, one after the other, all five of the party fell seriously ill with fever: the most that the authorities in Tsaritsin would allow was that they should disembark and live in a small hut, where they passed the cruelly cold winter months. On Friday in Passion Week of 1607 the 'Sergeant-Major' Francisco Riodolid died: on Holy Thursday following Lay Brother John. The survivors suffered from hunger, from lack of coverings in a half-barbarous village, where the partisans of Basil maltreated them and plotted to make away with them.

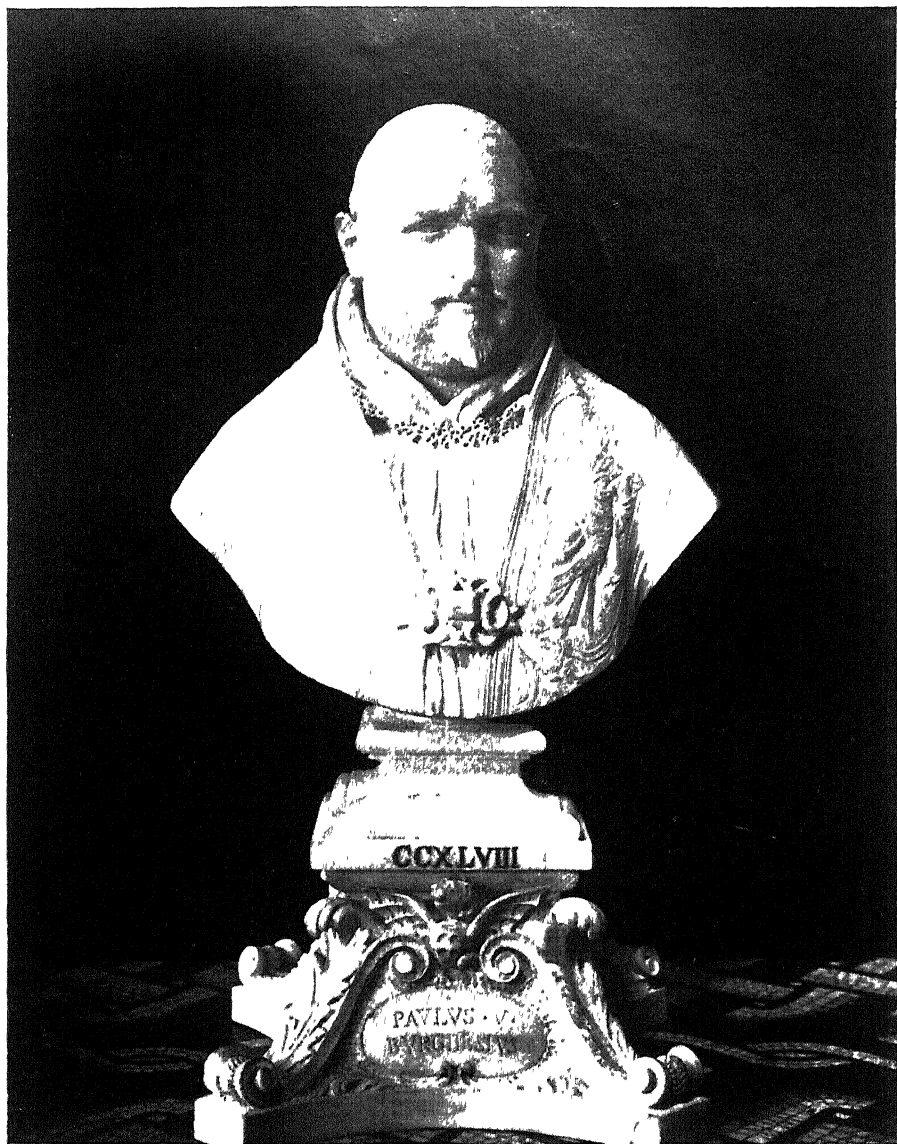
However, at Pentecost, 1607, a rumour reached Tsaritsin that Dmitri was still living, and caused a majority of the inhabitants to rise against the "governor", and send him bound to Astrakhan, while a soi-disant "prince" and brother of Dmitri marched from Astrakhan on Tsaritsin in order to come to an issue with the troops of Basil. The Cossacks of this force from Astrakhan and their commander proved benefactors for the Carmelites, gave them provisions and provided them with a craft and 20 rowers, with which they left Tsaritsin, 24.7.1607: and on 7.8.1607 they safely reached Astrakhan, where the governor received them well but, as they were without a written pass, would not allow them to sail for Persia until the "prince" mentioned above had been consulted and authorized their departure. Here Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig tried to put difficulties in their path, for he was detained, accused of having vilified Dmitri and his partisans. These surmounted, they left Astrakhan, 26.8.1607, being given an escort of Cossacks to accompany them down the Volga till where it flowed into the Caspian Sea, a week's sailing: and, even when they reached the Persian sailing-vessel which had contracted to take them, it was still loading, took two days more to do so and then, after a passage of 100 miles, lay at anchor for 24 days till 22.9.1607, before a favourable wind was found. The Carmelites were finally disembarked some ten miles from Baku, 27.9.1607. (In this twentieth century it needed to be shown how a party of men in a hurry to reach their objective should come to take more than three years to cover the distance between Rome and the shores of the Caspian.)

Their kindly protector, Pope Paul V, had begun to be anxious about their fate, as the following Brief he wrote to Shah 'Abbas on 22.3.1608 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 3, p. 173 (180) shows:

"Illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas king of the Persians greeting and the light
"of the Divine grace.

"As We have signified to You by several other letters of Ours, but particularly that
"which recently We gave Our beloved son John of Avila the Spaniard for Your Highness,
"at the beginning of Our Pontificate We at once took care that Our beloved sons, the
"Religious Paul Simon, John Thaddeus and Vincent brothers and priests of the Order of
"Discalced Carmelites, whom Our predecessor of happy memory, Clement VIII, had
"already dispatched to Persia, should accelerate the journey begun and bring to Your
"Highness Our letter to witness of Our especial liking for You, so that they might reveal
"to You the zealousness of Our goodwill so well-disposed toward You.

"But, because We have up till now heard nothing about the arrival of these men in
"Persia, although We understood that they had already at that time begun their journey
"in company of Your envoy who was returning to Your Highness from" (the Court of)
"Our very dear son in Christ, Rudolph the Emperor elect—they had joined him at the
"Court of the Grand Duke of Muscovy, for they were then staying at his Court—so We
"suspect that Our aforesaid sons and servants of God are being delayed by some hindrance,
"perhaps detained by the Muscovites themselves, or by the Tatars with the occurrence of
"the present disturbances in that realm, or else by the Turks who live on the Caspian
"Sea. But in whatever manner they are being stopped from reaching You, so much the
"more do We lament as We more keenly desire every day to be informed—because You well



POPE PAUL V (CAMILLO BORGHESE), 1605-21
Bust in the Royal Borghese Gallery, Rome, by Bernini

[Alinari photo]

"know the singular goodwill with which We regard You and the earnest longing which possesses Us of continuing that affection which existed between Our predecessor of happy memory and Your Highness.

"So We wish to bring all diligence to bear so that We may get to know what has befallen these three sons of Ours dispatched to You; and, because We have the greatest confidence in Your particular courtesy and kindness, and certain as We are that no one better than You can furnish this for Us, We urgently beg of You to be so good as to give instructions that search for these three sons of Ours, Paul Simon, John Thaddeus and Vincent, Discalced Carmelite Brothers who were coming with Your envoy to Persia, be assiduously and carefully made, especially among the Muscovites and Tatars, and even among the Turks by the Caspian Sea. By this good office You will indeed put Our regard under a great obligation to You, for, as You see, We are very troubled in mind for this reason, as will be related to You by this beloved son, John of Avila, whom, as We have indicated in Our other letter to You and heartily desire, We beg that You will receive kindly, and We pray too for Your Highness true happiness in Him Who alone can make men happy and blessed.

"Given at S. Peter's, Rome, under the Fisherman's Ring, 11th Kalends of April (22nd March) 1608, the third year of our Pontificate."

In the narrative¹ left by Fr. Paul Simon, the first Superior, there are many points of comparative interest to the reader who knows modern Persia, much in the ceremoniousness and customs observed, which bridge the gulf between 1600 and 1900.

"The same evening," he writes after describing the landing, "we went to lodge in a hamlet two miles off, where we learnt that the viceroy of that province, called Shirwan, was then staying at Baku. He was what they call a 'khan', and his name Z'ulfiqar Khan. We three Religious had disembarked . . . and there had come in our ship two Armenian traders, who had stayed with us for a year in Muscovy in the village of Tsaritsin. They landed with us, and begged the Fathers, my companions, to be allowed to accompany us, because otherwise they would have been looted, since the countryside (although it belonged to the king of Persia) was full of soldiers, and it was barely two months since he had taken it from the Turks:² they offered to serve us as interpreters, seeing that we had none for the Turkish language. It appeared uncharitable not to oblige them, apart from the fact that we hoped they might be of help to us in the matter of the union (of the church) of the Armenians. When we had reached the hamlet we dispatched one of them to the town of Baku, where the viceroy of the province was, with a letter which we wrote to the King of Persia in the following terms:

"Most serene and puissant king. The Sovereign Pontiff Paul V, our lord, head of the Christian princes, has sent us with letters of his, and secret business to Your Majesty. The disturbances in Muscovy have kept us in those parts more than we thought, to our displeasure at being unable to execute the bidding of His Holiness that we were to reach Your Majesty as quickly as possible. Today we have arrived close to Baku, Your town, and beg You to give orders that we be conducted to You as soon as may be. We carry also letters from Rudolph, Emperor of the Romans; Sigismund, king of Poland; and other Christian princes for Your Majesty."

"By the Armenian in question we asked the viceroy to forward the letter to his Majesty forthwith. The next day the Armenian returned, and with him a gentleman of Z'ulfiqar Khan, with orders to bring us to Baku, where he was. When the gentleman saw our poor garb, he remained somewhat taken aback, but did not show it. . . . When we arrived at Baku, they had not got ready rooms to lodge us, and so they kept us for about an hour in the square, and after that gave us a fairly comfortable dwelling.

"The town of Baku . . . was then almost in ruins from having been taken a few months

¹ O.C.D. 234 b.

² This dates the conquest of Shirwan by Shah 'Abbas to July 1607.

"previously from the Turks by the king of Persia.¹ There is an ancient palace with marble columns, and other curious things which show that in ancient times it had been a large town. Without our seeking it the Khan sent provisions for our food to the house, but insufficient . . . and he gave orders for one of his men to attend to us. The following day the Khan summoned us: we went and he asked us how we were, bade us welcome, with other ceremonious words they employ. We thanked him and begged him to have us given horses at our own charge (as we had need of them, since none could be had in the town without his orders) because it was necessary for us to go as quickly as possible to his Majesty. He replied that he was going off to Shamakhi,² the capital of the province where he had his residence, and that we should go with him and thence to the king. Before visiting him we had heard that he wanted us to go to Shamakhi so that we might see his grandeur and he might entertain us, as he was unable to do so at Baku, where he had arrived to hunt two days previously: so we thanked him for the favour but begged him to allow us to go to his Majesty straightaway, because by going to Shamakhi the journey would be lengthened. He said that it would not be longer: and so we left him. Two days later he invited us to dinner: we went. He had invited many people, and made us sit a short distance away from himself, on one side together with the laymen, who had come with us, it being the custom in this country, when they invite a foreigner and want to flatter him, to give seats to his servants also at their tables, which is a sign of the respect they have for the guest. On the other side sat the Persians. The fare was of various kinds of rice, meat, poultry, fruit and sweetmeats: the floor of the room was covered with rich carpets: the Khan sat on the ground according to the custom of the country in the front of the room. His gown was of coloured cotton, his jacket of rich brocade, lined with sable. On the carpets they spread three cloths, one for himself and three or four of his notables, which was of silk and gold; another for us and the third for the other Persians invited were of coloured silk. The Khan received us with courteous words: then immediately there was brought the dinner which lasted but a short time. Before quitting him once more we begged him to allow us to go by the shortest road to his Majesty, as we knew that he was making us go to his town of Shamakhi only to entertain us and show us his grandeur. . . . He replied that the road via Shamakhi was the shortest, and he was setting out thither immediately and would leave behind some of his men who the next day would accompany us and give us horses and everything necessary. . . . The following day we left on horseback for Shamakhi, where we arrived in two days: the whole countryside was abandoned, and we never saw any dwellings until some three or four miles distant from the town.

"In Shamakhi the Khan gave us lodging in the house of an Armenian priest, and sent us provisions daily: the same day that we arrived he sent three of the chief men to visit us and bid us welcome, and gave orders that they should not allow us to want for anything.

"The town of Shamakhi is large and formerly had been very populous, with an abundance of bread, wine, meat and other commodities for subsistence, and rich by its trade on account of the quantity of silk produced in that province. The inhabitants are Turks and Armenians, and the latter had a church there. Some ancient buildings are to be seen, and a Christian church in marble which now serves as a mosque. The town of Shamakhi embraces three walled towns, one in the upper part and the fortress where the 'viceroy' resides, the other two down below. When we entered it, they were altogether in ruins, as the King of Persia, who had captured it but a month previously,³ had had all those inside it killed, without sparing either women or children, and had had the two lower portions of the town, which are situated below the fortress, levelled by gunfire; because the Shah himself in person had stopped there 6 months without the town

¹ This dates, 1607, the end of the Turkish possession of Baku.

² Shamakhi is the Persian form of the name; Shamakha is found on maps.

³ In September 1607, therefore the capture of Shamakhi had taken place.

"consenting to surrender and, in order to avoid having to grant it mercy, he would not enter it, but went off directly he had taken it. It is situated in a strong position. Among the many others he had killed there the first were five hundred Darwish-es, the name by which they call their holy men.

"Four or five days after our arrival the Khan invited us to dinner. The building, in which he resided, was ancient and rather good. Before we entered the room where he was we passed through three rooms, two of them very large and full of Persians who were sitting on rich carpets and bowed to us as we passed. In the third room he was sitting with 25 or 30 grandees of the district and his officials, all sitting on the ground on carpets of considerably greater value than those in the other room. He made us sit at his side, first myself, then the Fathers, after them our interpreters. After some complimentary enquiries and replies the cloths were brought: that of the Khan, with whom two or three of the leading men and I sat, was of brocade, the others were of silk occupying the whole room. The other two rooms first traversed were also full of guests. The dinner was of various kinds of rice, meat, poultry; for us, who did not eat meat, eggs: it could not be compared, however, to the banquets in these countries" (of Europe). "At the meal he had wine given us, but excused himself for not partaking of it: because of his poor health he was not drinking any at that time. At the end of the dinner, which soon finished, we took our leave, begging him to allow us to depart. He promised to do so, but kept us for two weeks in Shamakhi, either to entertain us or because he awaited some reply from the Shah. All those days he always sent us food, his (table) cloths, water and some tit-bit from his own food, which there they consider a favour. He sent some of his men to visit us, and before our departure we went once more to visit him, though not to dine. He sent us as a present five horses—very good from what they told us—and 100 sequins. We thanked him but would not accept them, sending the apology that our Rule did not permit us to receive anything when we had what was necessary, as at present when His Holiness had furnished us with it. His men said that he would take it ill, should we not accept them, as in those countries it was considered an affront to spurn gifts, particularly those of the great. Many times they begged us to accept, and with this object two of his chief men came to persuade us. We told them that there was no cause to resent" (our refusal), "seeing that this was not to spurn his favours, but to carry out our Rule and what we had promised God. I think that he was so insistent about it, because he suspected that we would not accept his gifts from being dissatisfied with what he had done for us, and out of fear lest the Shah should take it ill that he had not been obsequious and made us gifts. So, seeing that they were unable to make us yield, he sent his secretary for us to give him a paper in my handwriting to the effect that he had sent us that present and we had declined to accept it: and I complied. Perceiving that he did not give us leave to set off, I sent out to find carriage-horses, but we found none, on account of the ruined state of the town, as I have said. Then I sent to beg the Khan to have horses found at our own expense, as we could no longer wait without disobedience to the instructions of His Holiness, our master. At once he sent horses for ourselves and camels for our effects.

"With our declining to accept gifts, and our not asking them for anything and fending for ourselves, they commenced to have respect for us, as in the beginning on seeing us so poor" (ly garbed) "and barefooted they had thought it was from penury: and so the peasants used to say to us that, when we got to his Majesty, he would give us good and rich clothing.

"On the 19th October we quitted Shamakhi: the Khan sent one of his men to accompany us and provide us with food for the journey. We travelled for 9 days, *almost always through deserted country*, without ever coming across any towns, save for some small hamlet. "On the second day (from Shamakhi) we crossed a rather large river called the Shirwan, which rises in Greater Armenia. All the rest of the countryside is flat and fertile, but uninhabited, as I have said, on account of it being hitherto in the frontier zone between

“the Turks and Persians, and thus plagued by the raiding. It was only a few months since the Shah of Persia had taken it. The inhabitants of these lands live in tents in the open, fifty of them together, or more: they are rich in cattle and will stay 15 days in one place, then move on to another, as the Tatars do.

“On the road we suffered considerably in the matter of victuals because, as we were not accustomed” (to the way to do things), “and the Khan had ordered that we should be given all we needed, as they are wont to do for foreigners who come there with letters from” (foreign) “princes, we had not made any provision: and the country people did not willingly give us anything, nor would they sell it (although we had given instructions to the interpreters to purchase it), fearing lest the king and the Khan should punish them should they take money from ambassadors—so they call anyone whatsoever who is going to their king with letters from foreign princes—for they are obliged to supply them with food gratis. For this reason they were concealing all they had, and making excuses, saying that they did not have what was asked of them: so that the man from the Khan, who was our guide, was obliged to use the stick: and, although it be not an unusual or new thing for them, yet we could not bear to see it, but contented ourselves with that little we had—mostly a little rice and unleavened bread made of barley, and water: our companions had meat.

“On the 28th October we reached Ardabil, and halted at a hamlet three miles from the town. Weary of the difficulties that for the past eight days we had had over food, I sent Fr. Vincent with one of the Armenians to get ready some rooms in the hostelry for us, as we did not wish to continue further at the expense of the king, nor to take his men with us, because, besides suspecting that the Khan might have given them money to purchase provisions in the town of Shamakhi, for every one coin they spent on us they were wont to take four from the peasants, and sometimes came to agreement for a cash bribe and arranged that not even for money should anything be given.

“When the Khan’s man learnt that I had sent the Father to get the hostelry ready, he came with tears begging me not to do that, because, besides it being an insult to the king, they would put him to death, thinking that he must have been a bad guide for us on the journey. I answered him that I was sorry for his grief, but was unable to do less, since we had not come to take things from the peasants, nor to have them sticked, but had received from His Holiness our needs (in funds). Seeing that he was unable to cause us to change our decision, he went off at once to inform the governor of the town, who without our knowing it had a good house got ready for us. On the 29th we left for the town. Before our entry there met us 25 Persians on horseback, well equipped according to their custom and with good horses. One of them greeted us in the name of the governor, and said that they had been sent to accompany us. When we entered the town, I told our men to turn towards the hostelry, where the Father had made arrangements for us: those who accompanied us would not consent: we stayed arguing about it for a little, telling them that we were not ‘ambassadors’, even though we had letters for the Shah, but poor friars: they finally answered that in no wise would they endure it that we should do such an affront to their king, that they knew who we were, and that the hostelry was for traders not for the like of us. They conducted us to the house prepared by the governor.

“Ardabil is a fairly large and well-populated town. It is situated in a plain to the south of the Caspian Sea, abounds in streams of water, and in every sort of commodities of subsistence. It is not a stronghold, nor walled. This king of Persia recaptured it a few years ago from the Turks.¹ The inhabitants belong to the Persian form of their religion and are more fanatic than them because they keep the bones of that Sufi king who introduced their form of creed, which is different from that of the Turks, and from whom these Shahs of Persia are descended. He is buried in a very ornate mosque, called

¹ Ardabil and district was thus recaptured by ‘Abbas I from the Turks only between 1598–1606.

"by his name. Adjoining the mosque there is a large hospital, where daily they give food to all those who go there, and many gather in pilgrimages from various parts. For this reason the inhabitants of the town are more fervent in practising their beliefs, and they do not drink wine. Their tongue is Turkish, like that of Shirwan. There were at the time many Armenians, whom the king had sent there, when he captured and burnt a few months ago many villages of Greater Armenia, where they were residing. As soon as we had reached the house they (the Persians) had prepared for us, there came in one of the chief of those they call in their tongue 'Qizil-bash': he greeted us in the name of the governor and told us that it was his duty to look after us, and give us whatever we asked for our food. We replied that there was no need of anything, and I instructed the Armenian to go and buy what was needful. They did not allow this but sent an abundant supply of food, more than was needed, so much that we gave it away in alms to many poor Armenians who came.

"Seeing how we disdained the provisions (sent us) and everything else—which had not been done by great ambassadors and others, who had passed by there with letters for their king, wearing richer apparel and having a larger following—they began to conceive a better opinion of us than those on the frontier had done, and they treated us with greater respect, especially as they had learnt from the man of the Khan of Shamakhi how we had declined the presents he gave us. On the following day the governor came to visit us, treated us with much respect and invited us to dinner the day after. We went: the house was furnished with rich carpets: around the room on the ground over the carpets were certain pieces of very fine cloth, folded in four, which in their tongue they call 'Tishnamak' [*? sic*] (and would cost 150 to 200 sequins for a good one) on which they sit. Almost at once dinner was brought, and he made us sit at the head with all our company: at the bottom he sat with two or three of the chief Persians of the town, and as a sign of greater respect he did not let any of his own people sit down. The (table) cloths were of a certain rich material from the Mogul's country.¹ The dinner consisted of an abundance of kinds of rice,² fowls, meat, sweets, fruit, etc. It was a vigil,³ and we ate only fruit and sweets. He asked us various questions about different things in order to entertain us, and displayed discretion in everything. At the end we begged him to have horses found for us at our own expense, so that we might leave: he replied that he would do so at once, and that money was not needed, because it was the custom and order of the Shah to provide ambassadors with everything for which they asked, and that his Majesty would take ill the annoyance we had had on our past journey, but that we should not marvel if the man of the Khan (of Shamakhi who was present) had given bastinadoes to the peasants, since that was the custom of the country and without it nothing was well done. We answered that we could not bear to see it, because our creed bids us to do good to all, that it was contrary to it that for our sakes poor folk in particular should be beaten, people who perhaps did not have anything to eat themselves, and that he should do us the favour of sending no one with us, seeing that the road was safe. He said that in no wise could he do that, because the Shah would punish him, if he did. . . .

"In the evening many Armenians, among them some priests, came to visit us: they invited us to their church for the next day: we promised to go there, it appearing to us that they were Catholics because they spoke well of Your Holiness and of everything that we spoke to them about the Faith. The next morning they came in procession to take us there, some 15 priests vested in the sacred vestments. Their chief carried in his hand the Holy Gospels, others crosses, others pictures of Our Lord: following them were some deacons and sub-deacons, also vested, and a great concourse of the people, both men and women. The chief priest gave us the book of the Holy Gospels to kiss,

¹ This may have been "Kishmir" (Cashmere) shawl, which has always had an extensive vogue in Persia.

² Persian cuisine knows how to serve many kinds of *pilau* as well as the plain *chilau*.

³ Doubtless of All Saints' Day, November 1st.

"and then we set out for the church:¹ the priests went in front, then I between two of them, next the Fathers, my companions, our interpreters and a crowd of Armenians with lighted candles in their hands. The priests and others sang psalms in their tongue, and played on certain instruments, which are used instead of bells. They directed the procession by way of the public square and through a good part of the town, to their delight, as they had never done the like before.² Some of the Muhammadans stopped their ears so as not to hear the sound of those instruments of the Armenians, but none dared speak (against it), since there came with us the guards of the governor. Arrived at the church, which was rather a stable and manger, one of them said Mass, and they prayed for Your Holiness, all the people saying the responses. We gave them such small alms as we were able. After the Mass, according to their custom on similar occasions, they prepared a small refectory and then accompanied us back in the same manner to our house. When we came out of the church and went along the streets many women and children came to kiss our hands, weeping for joy to see the Holy Cross and pictures carried in procession where hitherto they had been little respected, saying that that was as it were almost a beginning of the fulfilment of a prophecy that they say is written in their ancient books, viz. these regions were to be taken by the Turks and then recovered by the Latins. We kept the priests to dinner with us and some of their elders: they told us that in that town many hardships were inflicted on them, that our holy Faith was cursed in public, insults proffered against the holy pictures: and they begged us to ask the governor not to permit that, and to have an edict issued publicly forbidding anyone from speaking ill of Christians. I sent the Armenians who had come with us and our interpreters to the governor about this matter: he promised to do so, and sent a 'bailiff' or crier, who in the morning in the square in the name of the governor forbade under severe penalties what some Armenians, who accompanied him, told him to say: and because one man infringed the order, they suspended him by the feet in the square, and beat him.³ The whole time we were in Ardabil the governor sent us an abundant supply of food.

"On the 6th November he sent horses for us, and camels for our effects, together with two gentlemen and two arquebusiers to accompany us as far as Qazwin, the capital of the next province: he would not consent that our interpreters should make any provision for the road, as I had bidden them in order to avoid the inconveniences which had occurred in coming from Shamakhi: and he said that he had already given orders that we should be provisioned, without any bother being made with all that was necessary. We set out the same day, and spent 8 days in reaching Qazwin: we crossed some mountains, although most of the road is flat: we never came across any towns, or rather burghs and fortified vills, except at every 4 leagues. Most of these the king has granted to captains of horse and favourites of his, for the country is very fertile. Two days before reaching Qazwin we passed one of 500 houses where we had to dine. The governor, or proprietor, was a renegade Armenian, brother of a noble, also a renegade. First of all one of the Persians accompanying us went to get ready a house, the governor said that he did not want to give us either provisions or a house and that we should remain in the open. So we retired to a small room where strangers go: shortly afterwards the camels came in: we spread the carpets we had bought in Ardabil, and had the meal prepared. As the governor saw that we did not ask him to supply food and paid no attention to him, he came to visit us. The Fathers and I were shut in the room saying the Office and made him wait a little. . . . He begged us to remain that night so that he might entertain us. We did not consent, and when we left he accompanied us for two miles. Notwithstanding that we had complained to the governor of Ardabil about the displeasure

¹ Interesting to note that an Armenian place of worship was allowed in 1608 in such a stronghold of Shiah orthodoxy as Ardabil.

² Such a procession would have been impossible in 1908 in most small Persian towns, and illustrates the restraint imposed by the presence of European "envoys".

³ If on the soles of the feet, this was the *bastinado* properly so termed.

“caused us on the journey from Shamakhi, and his promise to put a stop to it, the men
“whom he sent with us behaved worse than the other man who had previously accom-
“panied us; because, although they did not beat the peasants, one of them went on ahead
“under the pretext of preparing lodgings, and for money came to an agreement with the
“people of the hamlet, who hid everything, and when we arrived there neither for money
“nor without were we able to obtain any supplies: and, unless we were to cause trouble,
“we had to be patient. Wearied by this we did not desire to halt outside Qazwin before
“entering, nor that they should inform the governor of the city of our coming; but, when
“we arrived at the town on 14.11.1607, without sending anyone to make preparations we
“went to the public inn, which in their language they call a ‘caravansarai’. The people
“marvelled and collected in numbers at the novelty: immediately the governor knew of it,
“he sent some of his men, apologizing for not having come to meet us, nor got ready a
“house, because he had known nothing about our coming, and begging us to go to the
“house he had (since) prepared, because where we were was not the place for the like
“of us to stay, but for merchants. We returned thanks to him, saying that there was
“nobody to blame, that we were poor Religious and not looking for such consideration,
“that he should excuse us, as we did not want to make a change, the rooms being good
“enough for one day that we were stopping there. The day passed in sending delegations
“and giving replies, but in the end we were obliged to go, as many people told us that the
“king would resent it and punish the governor (if we did not).

“Qazwin is a very large city, not smaller than Isfahan: it is the capital of ‘Media’, the
“former residence of the kings of Persia. There are good buildings, an abundance of all
“commodities for subsistence and entertainment, everything to be found as if in any of
“these our own cities (in Italy). It is much frequented for trade, as there is an abundance
“of silk, carpets, brocades. It is situated in a plain, has no walls, nor fort nor castle.
“The inhabitants are of the Persian creed, the language spoken neither Turkish nor Persian,
“but all understand Turkish and the majority Persian. The house they got ready for us
“belonged to the Shah: it was very comfortable and a little outside the town. The
“governor was a slave of the king, a renegade from childhood, of Georgian race. The
“same evening, although it was after nightfall, he came to pay us a visit, begging us not
“to tell the Shah that he had not gone out to meet us. We received him courteously, and
“answered that neither he nor anyone else was to blame, since we were not ambassadors
“but poor Religious, that they should not use such ceremonies with us and we did not
“wish it. That evening he had an abundance of food brought, and remained to supper
“with us. It would be tedious to relate the great compliments he paid us, saying that he
“was a Christian, calling me his ‘father’, and he did not cease marvelling to see our habit
“and our conduct, so different—I say ‘different’ because of the abasement of the Armenian
“Religious in those countries. We had caused our interpreters to send out to buy food,
“as we had done in all the other towns, notwithstanding that the governor had sent an
“abundant supply of it, but he would not allow it, and that was the cause that they made
“such a large provision for us. The governor left three hours after nightfall, having placed
“guards at the door and some men to wait on us. . . .

“There was residing in the city of Qazwin an English gentleman, Robert Sherley,
“brother to him who years ago came as ambassador from the king of Persia to our lord
“Clement VIII. For about 10 years this gentleman had been in Persia in the service of the
“king. In the morning he sent a man to visit us, apologizing for not doing so in person, as
“he was ill. Afterwards in the evening he came, and it was a comfort to us to see
“him, in order to get information about the Shah’s affairs. We learnt that he was
“greatly disgusted at the news of the Emperor having made peace with the Turks
“and at not having received any letter for four years past from Your Holiness,
“nor tidings of his own ambassadors whom he had sent to the Emperor, and
“other items of news, particularly that the king was expected from day to day to arrive
“in the city of Isfahan. This gentleman showed us much kindness. He invited us to

"dine, and we showed him great confidence, knowing the harm that he could do us, if "he were opposed to us, although at that time he was not in much favour with the king. "He told us that every day the king and some of the nobles were badgering him to turn "renegade, making him great promises. The pay which the king had formerly been "accustomed to give him was coming in with difficulty, and only partially: when he had "asked permission to depart the Shah had refused it him, saying that he and his brother "had eaten his" (the Shah's) "bread for so long. He begged us to befriend him and obtain "for him, if it were possible, sanction from the Shah for him to return to his country, "saying that for this he would go with us to Isfahan, whither we wished to set out forth- "with. But the governor kept us in Qazwin for six days, putting us off from one day to "the next: he did this in order to cajole us, coming to visit us each morning and evening, "and remaining to supper with us: and he constantly begged us not to tell the Shah of "what had happened previously. To give us pleasure he caused all the Armenians to be "released from prison and omitted nothing of which he could think to give us it. All "this time he sent us such quantities of food that we sent (some of) it back.

"On 20.11.1607 he sent us horses and camels for our effects. We departed the same "day, and the governor with that English gentleman accompanied us outside the city, "and he sent two of his men with us to accompany us and provide for us on the road, not "having allowed us to provide for ourselves in the city. On the second day I felt ill with "fever, which increased each day: after three days we reached Sab'eh, a town not very "large, whence it took two days to Qum, a town of larger size. The governor with some "people of the town came out to meet us, and gave us good quarters. The countryside "was flat, much more inhabited (than further north), and, although we met only those "two towns, the fortified villas were more often large. They gave us plenty of provisions "for the road. Qum is rather a nice town, well stocked with everything. The governor "came to see me and sent me the doctor, who found me with a very high fever and very "weak from inability to eat or sleep: it appeared to him that there was insufficient time to "give me medicine, as we were about to travel. After two days then we left: they gave "us 9 horses and camels. I was constrained to ride in a 'cradle'"¹ on (the back of) "a camel, "as I was unable to sit on horseback: two days later we reached Kashan, a very fine and "wealthy town, although not so large as Qazwin. It is situated in a plain abounding in "water. The Shah has built there a fine palace and a caravansarai for strangers which is "celebrated. In Kashan they make very fine carpets of silk and gold (? thread), brocades, "velvets and other silk stuffs: it is much frequented by traders from being on the road to "Khurasan, to the Mogul's territories and to India, whence many valuable goods are "brought. I arrived in Kashan in parlous state from my sickness, aggravated by vomiting. "The Englishman had got there the day before and taken up his lodging in the king's "caravansarai, where the governor installed us also. The Englishman came at once to "visit us, and the governor sent (a man). That night they gave us no food, and the follow- "ing day little. We sent it back, saying that we had no need of it. Then the governor "came to call on us and begged us to take it, apologizing for his men through carelessness "not having sent it the previous day. We answered that we did not mind that and had "not accepted the provisions because we had already supplied ourselves with what was "needed: still to afford satisfaction to the governor and the Englishman we accepted them "and had them distributed to the poor, so that they might pray for his Majesty. My "fever increased: so we begged the governor to arrange for horses to be given so that I "might get to Isfahan and rest there. He put us off from day to day. I sent out to get some "post-horses, and, none being to be had, set off with two or three of our men, leaving "orders for the Fathers to follow me the next day without saying anything to the governor, "because I should march slowly. I was already on the camel when the governor, who had

¹ "Cuna"—probably the open woodwork crate, called *pāluki*, a pair of which is slung either side of the mule or camel, in which pilgrims, aged or women, travel the Persian roads to Mashhad, Karbala, etc., and not the covered and more elaborate *kajāweh*.

"learnt that I was leaving, came round. He begged me to wait, he would have horses fetched for all. I thanked him, saying that he could see very well how indisposed I was, and that I was obliged to get to Isfahan as speedily as possible in order to be cured, that the Fathers my companions would join me soon: and so I set out. The following day he at once sent horses for the Fathers, and in the evening they joined me. On the third day at night we reached a hamlet 12 miles from Isfahan. They made difficulties there about giving us a house, so we lodged at the public hospice. One of the Persians accompanying us set off for Isfahan forthwith in order to inform of our arrival the Shah, who two or three days before had arrived from a pilgrimage. That Persian returned before dinner-time and told us that the Wazir of the king had been annoyed and regretted that they had not given us lodging the night before: and that he gave instructions for us to go to the village and wait there till the following day, when they would send for us: and the Englishman wrote similarly to me. On the morning of the 2nd December they notified us that we should ride towards the city: one mile later we met the Mihmandar¹ of the king—thus they call in their language one who has charge of ambassadors and of persons of some quality, because he is always with the Shah—he came together with some gentlemen from that Englishman to meet us. He greeted us, and after the customary ceremonies we continued on the road, he leading the way. The office of the Mihmandar is to see that no offence is offered to ambassadors, to refer to the Shah what they desire, and to accompany them when they go out of doors: the rest of the time he stands at the king's gate and goes with him to see whether he gives instructions about anything. After two or three miles we found the Prior of the Augustinian Fathers with three other Fathers and two Italian laymen, who were waiting to conduct us to the city. The meeting with them was a great comfort to us, as it was such a long time since we had seen any Religious. A little while afterwards there met us the governor of the city² together with some 50 nobles who saluted us and bade us welcome in the name of his Majesty. In this style we rode on, I at the side of the governor, the Persians in front, the Augustinians and our Fathers behind. The governor accompanied us up to the door of the house which they had got ready for us inside the city, and then he left. The Augustinian Fathers stayed for a while with us: that evening they paid me the attention of lending me a bed and sent supper for me: and they sent us an invitation, in case we wished to stay with them; the house that had been given to us not being very good, but chiefly in order that we might live in unity with them (as Your Reverences so many times bade us to arrange to do, and so do away with many matters for discord which the Devil might stir up between them and ourselves) I accepted the offer. The Mihmandar returned that evening and brought us a supply of food. The following day I went to stay with the Augustinian Fathers: the two (Carmelite) Fathers and the laymen who had come with us remained in the house that the king had given us. The Mihmandar came to visit me on behalf of the Shah. That day they did not provide our Fathers with provisions, nor afterwards, it being the habit, after one has reached the place where the Shah is, not to give them except for the first day.

"The Patriarch of the Armenians, the bishops and many Armenians whom the king transplanted to Isfahan, when he captured Armenia, asked permission of the Shah to (be allowed) to come and meet us; but, as the annoyance which the king felt over the (project for) union . . . was still fresh, he did not wish them to come. The Shah had gone off hunting, where he remained for four or six days. Now the Patriarch and some of the bishops came to visit us: he asked to be excused for not having done so previously, nor having come to meet us at our entry, out of fear of the Shah. He complained to me of the harm that the Augustinians had done in giving to the Shah that written document in which obedience was made to the Sovereign Pontiff, because the king was wanting to have another patriarch appointed, and already many of his flock no longer obeyed him out of fear of the Shah. He came a second time to visit us, and we went to see him.

¹ Literally in Persian, the 'guest-haver', or 'holder', i.e. the 'guest-master'.

² Doubtless the *daruga*.

"He discussed many matters with us regarding that Christian body and the desire he had of coming to Rome, if he had been able, as I shall tell elsewhere.

"On the 5th of the month (December) the Mihmandar again paid me a visit on behalf of the Shah, and asked whether we wished to go and have an audience. I answered that "he saw in what a state" (of health) "I was. If his Majesty would postpone it for two or three days I should esteem it a favour: if not, I should go as best I could, whenever he might command me. With that he went away. With rest, and after having been bled, and with the attentions paid me by the Augustinian Fathers, the fever left me on the 20th. All this time the Shah did not send to tell us anything about the audience, but he was endeavouring through the Mihmandar, who visited us frequently, and through the Englishman and others to learn the (purport of the) communication we brought, but "was unable to do so. . . .

"When I had got rid of the fever little by little I gained strength. The Shah asked that English gentleman openly on what business we were coming, whether to negotiate for the union of Armenians with His Holiness. . . . The Englishman answered that he knew we did not come about that, but about matters which would give satisfaction to his Majesty, although in conversation he had not learnt what they were. The Shah told him that he would summon us soon (to the audience). Almost at once after our arrival he ('Abbas I) had sent to the house of the Augustinian Fathers one of his men together with two professional soothsayers so that they might find out for what purpose we had come to his realm. The man who brought them remained in the courtyard, while the Mihmandar and Augustinian Fathers were with me: he bade those diviners see whether we came to do harm to the king. They opened their books and said 'no' . . . then they went away. A servant of the Fathers, who overheard everything without being seen by them, related it to them. That English gentleman and the Augustinian Fathers informed us minutely about the position with the Shah: and *we found it to be just the contrary of what they had written to His Holiness*.¹ . . . That we found the king in that ill-humour, especially with the fresh annoyance he had felt over the peace made by the Emperor with the Turks, was the reason why he did not receive us, as he had done in former cases, and that he delayed so much in giving audience to us. . . . While that English gentleman was one day at a banquet given by the Shah to certain Turkish Pashas, whom he has with him, the king enquired of him about my health. He answered that I was better. The king said, 'Today has been the day for the Turks: another one will be for Fathers'. We were informed that it was customary to make some present to the Mihmandar: so we sent him some fruit and 20 sequins. Finally, seeing that his Majesty was delaying much in summoning us, I sent our Armenian with the other laymen to call on the Grand Wazir of the king and to tell him that we had arrived, now many days past, in that capital with letters and business of His Holiness for the Shah, and yet we had not been summoned, a most unwonted occurrence, as he well knew, and that he should arrange to ascertain from his Majesty what we were to do. In a kindly way he replied that he would do so (although we had learnt that he was a great enemy of Christians, and that he did not afford them any good offices with the Shah and—astute old man that he was—suspected that we were coming to make a church): and he made excuses for the Shah, saying that "I had been ill, and afterwards his Majesty had been ill and had had other engagements. On the following day the Mihmandar came with the like excuses, saying that his Majesty would soon summon us.

"The holy festival of Christmas arrived, when we did not pursue the matter and did not care to be summoned. The Englishman invited the Augustinian Fathers and us to dinner with him, and another day we invited him, the Augustinian Fathers and the Mihmandar.

"On the 21st December the Shah went outside Isfahan because his 'Lent', in which Muhammadans do not eat during the daytime, had begun: and, since the Shah, who did not observe (the fast), did not wish to scandalize his subjects, he went off hunting. On

¹ This must allude to Fr. da Costa, Miranda and the Augustinians: possibly to Sir A. Sherley, too.

"2.1.1608 the Shah inquired anew of the Englishman whether we were coming to discuss the business of the Armenians: he replied 'no' . . . the king bade him at once go and find me and offer me his excuses, asking us to forgive him for having delayed so long in giving us audience, because at first he did it out of regard for my illness, then he himself had been away. . . . The Englishman brought me at once the message, and again urged me to discuss nothing with his Majesty about the Armenians, about making a church and such matters, because the king showed signs of becoming accommodating once more, while the slightest annoyance given would end by spoiling all. . . . Finding the Shah so ill-disposed, it appeared to us necessary not to discuss anything at all that might cause him annoyance, such as that business of the Armenians, and that one of us ought to return to make a report to His Holiness and to our Superiors on the attitude of the king and regarding our mission, since we could not do so by letter, both because we had never received any letters from Rome in so many years¹ and suspected that our letters might no more have been delivered there, and also because a full report could not be given by letter, while there was the danger that the king of Persia might intercept them and of his being helped to understand our intention of remaining in coming to Persia. So I decided to say in my audience with the king that His Holiness had bidden me return at once with the reply (Your Reverence having in the last letter which you sent us in Muscovy from Paul V for the king of Persia told us that we might use his name sometimes, if expedient). . . . On 3.1.1608, after dinner, the king summoned us to the audience. We were accompanied by the Prior and two Augustinian Fathers, by the Mihmandar and by the servants of that English gentleman, all being on horseback, he being with his Majesty.

"When the king summoned us he was in a large courtyard of his stables, inspecting and choosing horses for the war, and receiving many people who offered him theirs, which they are accustomed to do when the Shah leaves for the wars, as he was on the point of doing. He was seated on a mound, on a carpet of little value, clothed in black cloth, since it was then in 'Lent' (i.e. Ramazan). A little behind him sat two Turkish pashas. The prince, his son, and other nobles were standing. Outside a crowd of soldiers and other people were waiting. When we reached the king, we bowed and kissed his hands, first I, then the other two Fathers, the Augustinians and our interpreters. (Not only his own people, however great they may be, but foreigners and ambassadors from great kings kiss his feet, only to the Franks does he offer his hand.) The Shah inclined his head, greeting us, and asked us how we were, telling us we were welcome, etc., which are the ceremonies with which they receive foreigners. We answered him that we were well and at his service and happy to see his face. I gave him the letters we brought, firstly those of Clement VIII, then those of our lord Paul V, expressing our joy in the name of His Holiness at the remarkable victories which the lord God had given him against the Turks, the common enemy, and assuring him that the" (affectionate) "regard our lord Paul V had for him was not a jot less than that of Clement VIII, whose consideration for him was well known to him. The Shah asked news of the health of His Holiness and whether he were young: we replied that he was well and young. Then we gave him in the second place a letter from the Emperor, telling him about the kindnesses (of the Emperor) to his ambassadors who had gone there, and how he (the Emperor) desired to retain one of them with himself in order to establish friendship the better, but that the ambassador would not consent to remain. The Shah told me that the Emperor had lost his kingdom, one of his people having taken it from him (I think he said this on account of the news he had had about the Archduke Matthias), and had no longer any power (left), and so had made peace with the Turks, contrary to promises several times made, while he ('Abbas I) had persevered in the war for 10 years continuously.² . . . I answered

¹ i.e. since 1604, nearly 4 years.

² In the draft or version of Fr. Paul Simon's report preserved in O.C.D. 234 b., the rest of the manuscript is missing. The deficiency is here made good from the version in the corresponding part of the report to Pope Paul V, to be found in Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, p. 157. The first-named text was probably addressed to the Praepositus General of the Carmelites.

"that the Emperor was as powerful as before and had not lost his throne,¹ nor made peace with the Turks, and that his Majesty ('Abbas I) should not credit all they said, because Your Holiness had also heard that he ('Abbas I) had too made peace with the Turks, but had not believed it. Monsignor the Cardinal of S. George had written to me that they were saying this in Rome. As regards the Christian princes not having made war on the Turk, the cause of that had been the deaths of Clement VIII and Leo XI. In the third place I handed him one letter from the king of Poland (when the Shah observed to me that the Tatars had taken the kingdom away from him), one from the Cardinal of S. George, another from the Marquis de Villena. Then I told him that we had secret business to discuss with him in the name of Your Holiness, that such was not for that place, and asked that he would be pleased to give instructions as to when we should go to him, because His Holiness had instructed me to return at once with the reply, as I desired to do, and that the Fathers, my companions (unless his Majesty gave other instructions) would remain at his Court until Your Holiness dispatched an ambassador to him, in order to inform Your Holiness of the progress he might make in the war, and whatever might occur to his Majesty, or else they would return, because His Holiness desired solely what was his ('Abbas I's) pleasure.

"The king answered that he was content that I should go back and that he would find me a short and sure road, and that as to the secret business we brought and anything else whatsoever his palace would always be open to us. We then handed him some presents that we brought him, which were valued at more 2,000 scudi and pleased him, especially a cross in Bohemian crystal ornamented with gold, and the Christ on it of the same (metal) and with some emeralds and other good stones. The king held it for a while in his hand and said, 'it is very beautiful'. The prince his son too said the same.² Twice then he asked me whether it was Your Holiness who was sending those presents for him. I replied 'no', that as the journey was so full of difficulties, as he knew, Your Holiness was not sending him either an envoy or presents, for neither we nor the others sent in the time of Clement VIII were ambassadors: (I said) that Your Holiness had (at disposal) distinguished men and would send him ambassadors at the first convenient opportunity and presents worthy of Yourself and of his Majesty, who would receive them. In oriental countries it is discourteous to pay a visit to anyone, particularly if it be a prince or king, without making him the first time a present of something, however small, according to the degree of the person making the gift. He then made us sit down at his side and cover our heads, and kept us for two hours, while he was inspecting horses which he was selecting for the war, and spoke to us from time to time. He asked us whether we had brought some fine arquebuse or other: our interpreter answered 'no'. He showed us many signs of kindness and said that we should excuse him for not inviting us to dinner, because it was then their 'fast' in which they are not accustomed to give banquets, nor do they eat in the daytime. We kissed his hand and went away: he turned to say to me that he would send me off at once.

"Two days later we went to have the secret audience. At 21 o'clock³ he came out to

¹ Actually it was six months later, 25.6.1608, when the Emperor Rudolf was obliged to transfer to his more compliant brother, Matthias, the government of Hungary, Austria and Moravia, while retaining his rights as King of Bohemia.

² Another account—in *A Persia*, cited, p. 117, has the additional detail—

"The king opened the book of the Old Testament by chance at the page where the combat between the good angels and the bad angels is related. When he saw the dragon vanquished and prostrate at the feet of S. Michael, who was brandishing his sword, threatening the Devil, the king inquired: 'Who is that vanquished at the feet of the angel?' Fr. Paul replied: 'This is the fallen angel, whom we call the Devil'. 'No,' said the Shah, laughing much, 'this is the Turk' (i.e. the Sultan). As he said it, he continued to laugh, glancing over his shoulder at the Turkish Pashas . . . for he lost no opportunity to mock at them. He charged a Mulla to write on each page of this book of miniatures in the Persian language what they represented: and, so that he might do it the more correctly, to refer to the Carmelites. Lastly, we gave him a small barrel of vodka from Muscovy, which they" (in Persia) "esteem highly, notwithstanding the prohibition against such liquors in the Quran, and which the Shah valued the more because of the scant observance with which he kept Ramazan. His Majesty could not find words to thank them for so acceptable a present. . . . During the whole audience the Shah addressed not once a word to the Augustinian Fathers. . . ."

³ This must be what the Persians call *dasteh* time, taken and reckoned from sunset the evening before.

"witness an entertainment he had prepared for us in the main square—bull-fights and ram-fights after their (Persian) style. After having kissed his hand and looked at the spectacle for a time I asked permission of him to speak. He granted it. I expounded the *first* point of the mission, i.e. the great regard Your Holiness had for him, and that You desired to know what was his attitude towards Yourself and the Christian princes: *Secondly*, the great desire Your Holiness had of making war on the Turks, and how You were endeavouring to unite the Christian princes against the latter on the sea. When I touched on this point he was pleased and paid no more attention to the sports. Without allowing me to finish he replied that the kings of Persia, his predecessors, had always had friendly relations with the Roman Pontiffs and with the kings of Christendom, just as he had equally friendly ones and would continue always to maintain them: that he was very pleased that Your Holiness wanted to make war on the Turks, and on his part he would not fail: that winter he would be going against Baghdad, and thence towards Constantinople, for which he was making preparations. He wanted Your Holiness to send him a Latin bishop for the 'Three Churches'—that is how they call a church much reputed for sanctity in Greater Armenia at the foot of the mountain of Noah's ark), where the Armenian patriarch resides,¹ as there was none for the time being, as the Shah had deposed him: and, because a number of persons came to him ('Abbas I) with letters (forged) in the name of Your Holiness and of the Christian princes, so that they might not be deceived, he said he would give me for His Holiness and the Christian princes (an impression of) "his private seal on paper, to check the letters he would be writing, and that I should leave him mine as a countersign that would be on those Your Holiness and the Christian princes would write him: that he wished me to leave as soon as possible, and that I should return by way of Aleppo in the garb of an Armenian monk, so that I should quickly make a report to Your Holiness, and that he would give me guides to conduct me safely.

"I answered that I would do what his Majesty might bid me. I had been advised to be careful should he speak about the Armenians, because he might perhaps do so in order to discover from me whether we had come for that: so I did not make any reply to him on the point of the Latin bishop whom he desired for the 'Three Churches'. On that about leaving him my seal I said that His Holiness and the Christian princes would send him their secret countersigns.²

"I was wanting to continue on the other points, which, later, another day, I gave him in writing; but it was already night. So he told me that that was not a convenient time, that we should return another time and be alone in a room where we could speak about everything, that within another two days he was leaving for Mazandaran, one of his states 25 days' distant from Isfahan. We kissed his hands and left.

"The Fr. Prior of the Augustinians, who had come with us, said to the Shah that he wanted to send one of his Fathers to India: would his Majesty be pleased to reply to the letter which a few days previously he had given him from the king of Spain. He" ('Abbas I) "answered him curtly that he had got ready an ambassador. The Shah called the Mihmandar and bade him see whether we wanted a horse, or silk, or brocade, or money, because he wished to make us a present, and tell the Prior of the Augustinians that he should decide that night whether he (the Prior) wished to agree to the messenger (ambassador) whom he had got ready to go to Spain with him" (the Prior), "otherwise he (the Shah) would not reply to the letter from his" (the Prior's) "sovereign. The Mihmandar that evening delivered his message. We answered in the presence of the Augustinian Fathers (in whose house I was still lodging) that we thanked his Majesty for his courtesy; that our poor habit and our Rule did not permit of our receiving brocade,

¹ i.e. Echmiadzin, near the base of Mt. Ararat.

² Till recent years in this century, at any rate, Persians have been very suspicious both of their correspondence being intercepted and of forgery in the signatures of those writing to them (bogus letters) or, rather, of the seals (frequently fabricated): and they therefore used *nshan* and *'ashareh* (= sign and allusion) in the body of the letter-references to something both the writer and recipient knew—to reassure the latter of the genuineness of the letter.

"money or anything else, when we possessed the needful, as then; that Your Holiness had provided us with it when we left Rome: that the greatest gift he could bestow on us and that we should most esteem would be his favour. The Augustinian Prior replied that he did not want an ambassador sent, so that he would leave for India without a reply to the letter from the king of Spain. The Mihmandar (I think by direction of the Shah) inquired whether one of my companions was willing to go to Spain with the Persian envoy in question. We made apology for their not undertaking the mission by saying that Your Holiness had directed that they should remain in Persia in the service of the king, and that they could not depart unless Your Holiness or his Majesty gave orders to the contrary.

"On the following day we went to visit the Grand Wazir (to whom previously we had sent a present): he paid us many compliments. We begged him to help in obtaining sanction from the Shah for the Englishman (who was present) to be allowed to return to his country, which we asked of his Majesty in the name of His Holiness. The Wazir executed the commission with the Shah and obtained the permission and, I think, also requested that the Shah would dispatch him (R. Sherley) as his ambassador to Your Holiness and to the Christian princes in response to our mission, because in the reply which the Shah gave me in writing to the points, which I discussed with him in the name of Your Holiness, sealed with his private seal, he says: 'I wanted to send one of my own people with Fr. Paul Simon, but, since you have requested me to send Don Robert Sherley, I am dispatching him'.

"It appeared to us that it was expedient to dissemble for the time being until the Englishman had quitted Persia, in order not to spoil the business: because otherwise he would not go away and, if he were to remain, he would be against His Holiness and ourselves.¹ I left instructions with the two Fathers, my companions, to tell the Shah, when he returned from Mazandaran, that in the name of His Holiness we had only asked him to grant permission to the Englishman to return to his own land, and nothing else, which was apparent from the 'Note' I had handed him (the Shah) in the Persian language signed by own hand, a copy of which remained with his Majesty: and that" (they should tell the Shah) "I would ask (unless he should give instructions to the contrary) His Holiness in his name for the bishop for the Armenians, as he bade me, with regard to which owing to his sudden departure I had not had time to learn more distinctly what was his (the Shah's) wish in that and other respects, but that they (the Fathers) would take my place and inform me.

"The Mihmandar reported to the Shah that we would not accept anything: they told me that he displayed displeasure: however, he gave orders that we should be given 100 tumans, i.e. 1,500 scudi.

"On the following day, as I felt somewhat indisposed, I sent my companions (one of whom knew the Persian language well) together with our interpreters to ascertain when we should return to" (audience with) "the king. He ('Abbas I) immediately summoned me, having to leave the same day on account of some news concerning the war which he had received. I went to him at once.

"The Shah was sitting at the gate of his saraglio on a plinth² made for the purpose, and was giving public audience. I kissed his hand, and he made me sit on another raised platform opposite him. The Wazir and two of his councillors were standing near the Shah, the rest at a distance. He dispatched" (the business of) "Don Robert the Englishman by giving orders to the Wazir as to the letters he was to write to Your Holiness

¹ The impression derived from all points of this account is that Robert Sherley did not go in 1608 to Europe as a valued plenipotentiary: that he himself was disheartened, much out of favour, and wanted an opportunity to get back to Europe (being still more or less a hostage for his brother): that 'Abbas I had no use for him in Persia, or as his agent in Europe, and by preference would have let one of the Carmelites act as companion, interpreter and foil to his Persian emissary: Sherley was only sent because the Carmelites asked that he should be the companion, etc.: while the Carmelites, at first suspicious of his being a Protestant antagonist, thought thus to get him out of the way.

² "Poggio": this was perhaps a *takkeh*, a small portion of plinth between two columns where Khans were wont till recently to sit at their gates transacting affairs, dispensing justice.



FR. PAUL SIMON OF JESUS MARY, O.C.D

Leader and Superior of the first Carmelite expedition and mission to Persia. Later elected the 7th Praepositus General of the Order, 6.5.1623; re-elected, the 10th, 5.5.1632, re-elected, the 13th, 21.4.1641

"and the Christian princes and send by him: he ('Abbas I) gave him the impression in ink of his private seal on a piece of paper as a countersign for the letters, which in the future he would write to Your Highness and the Christian princes. He instructed him" (R. Sherley) "to leave immediately the Wazir gave him the letters, and ordered that they should provide him with money for the journey.¹ When the Englishman had been attended to, he ('Abbas I) called me. I handed him in writing the points which I was to discuss with him, begging him to reply in writing. At once he had it read out by the Wazir, and then had a brief discussion with him and his councillors, then he told me to sign it."

Of this "Note Verbale"—as it would be termed in modern diplomatic practice—embodying the instructions from Rome, there are two versions given, one by the eighteenth-century Carmelite chronicler, Fr. Eusebius ab Omn. Sanctis, in his manuscript *History of the Missions*, another in the Spanish work *Á Persia* of Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus, 1929, not greatly differing, but the first is followed here below:

"To the most high and puissant Shah 'Abbas, king of the Persians, Brother Paul Simon of Jesus Mary and his companions, Discalced Carmelites, sent to him by the Sovereign Pontiff of the Christians, wish much prosperity.

"The Sovereign Pontiff Paul the Fifth, head of all the Christian world, has specially asked in his letters written to You, most puissant king, that You will be so good as to put undoubting faith in whatever will be intimated to You in his name by us. And, first of all, he has commanded us repeatedly, and with the greatest earnestness, to reveal to You on his behalf certain matters of no small moment. . . . We are convinced that it would be convenient to put this in writing. We therefore entreat Your Majesty to deign to give the reply in the same manner. His Holiness has dispatched us here" (by way of certain countries in Europe in order to speak to the Emperor regarding an alliance which the Pope would like to make between all the Christian princes with the object of aiding Your Majesty in his wars against the Turk, and the Roman Pontiff would like to know Your opinion regarding this²) "and to report to him whatever may be Your attitude.

"Secondly. His Holiness ardently longs to get together a great force, and to unite and instigate the Christian princes to attack the Turk by sea with a formidable armada. He begs You to continue to fight valiantly against this common enemy by land and in the direction of Aleppo.

"Thirdly. His Holiness offers to send you engineers and men skilled in the art of war, so that they may be of use to you in this and any other enterprise. With this object he had already sent, incognito, with us a 'Sergeant-Major' of the Spanish troops in Flanders, where he had commanded a select body of 4,000 soldiers and was very expert in these military matters: he was coming to find out from Your Majesty and report to the Pope what kind and numbers of artillerymen, etc., it might be necessary to dispatch to You. Unfortunately during our stay, or rather detention in Muscovy, where Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig Your envoy was similarly detained and knew him, this 'Sergeant-Major' was cut off by death.

"Fourthly. The Pope proposes to accredit to Your royal person a distinguished personage³ as his ambassador, and asks that Your Majesty would send to his court a representative

¹ Quoting another manuscript version *Á Persia*, p. 127, states that R. Sherley was given 1,500 sequins, half for travelling expenses, half for "representation" expenses. ² Interpolated from *Á Persia*, p. 120.

³ That Fr. Paul Simon, after his return to Rome, did what he could to implement this part of the secret proposals to 'Abbas I, put forward by him while in Persia, is shown by a note in Fondo Borghese, Ser. IV, 86, p. 317, addressed.

"Holy Father—Fr. Paul Simon, C.S., puts forward for the consideration of Your Holiness, in case it is decided to nominate an ambassador to be sent to Persia, the person of Don Andrea Spinola, who has the following qualifications. He is the son of an Italian father from Genoa and a Spanish mother, was brought up in his early years in Spain, when older has lived many years in Italy, for a large part in Rome. He has 5,000 scudi p.a. income" (a rich man, therefore): "is persona grata with the king of Spain, who surely would give him something to keep us the position."

"of permanent character, to reside in Rome, as it is to be desired that the communication
 "of secrets and plans between Your Majesty and the Pope should be more frequent and
 "frank, as is extremely necessary in the present contingency, for the observance of the
 "mutual compact to be arranged, to render friendship closer, to stimulate the war against
 "the Turk, and to prevent the plots which certain malicious persons contrive either by
 "forged letters or by false and lying news. These ambassadors should reside for several
 "years at both courts, and receive letters from their own sovereigns (which by way of
 "Aleppo can arrive in two months), and in this way deal with current affairs. Thereafter
 "it would be no longer necessary to dispatch fresh ambassadors every few months, which
 "experience has shown to be useless, both on account of the many difficulties of the journey
 "and from the long delay in receiving the replies, as, finally, also because of other events
 "which sometimes befall. Thus the Emperor tried to retain at his court Your envoy,
 "Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig, who, however, would not consent.

"*Fifthly.* When we were on the point of leaving, the Pope commanded us several times
 "particularly to endeavour to ascertain from Your Majesty what You desire him to do
 "whether for You, or in Your interest, and to inform him as soon as possible.

"*Sixthly.* With all insistence he begs Your Majesty to give instructions that all Christians,
 "whether Your subjects born in Your realm, or foreigners who arrive from elsewhere, or
 "those brought as prisoners of war in Your campaigns, be treated kindly and that You
 "will not allow any violence or harm to be done them to make them apostatize from the
 "Christian Faith; while he steadfastly promises You that he will see that the like treatment
 "is used towards Your subjects, whether they be travelling through Christian lands or,
 "having been made prisoners by the Turks, fall in whatsoever way into the hands of
 "Christians.

"*Seventhly.* The Sovereign Pontiff and Rudolph Emperor of the Romans beg of Your
 "Majesty the favour to grant permission to Don Robert Sherley to return to Italy and
 "Europe, on account of the frequent appeals which his father, now an old man, has made
 "to him to do so. His return would be useful in that he would be able to give accurate
 "information to His Holiness about the affairs of this country, and You will have more
 "certain evidence, as we hope, of his loyalty, already proven in his constant and attentive
 "service to Your Crown: because, as he has relatives of much consideration in England,
 "it may happen that by means of his connections he may be able to persuade the puissant
 "king of that island to make a league with You, and annul and break that which he had
 "made with the Turk: this would, without any doubt, redound to Your advantage and be
 "of notable use for Your interests.

"Meanwhile the Pope bade me, the senior of the others and least of his envoys, carry
 "back to him as speedily as possible the replies of Your Majesty. . . . I am now ready to
 "do so. . . . Our lord has also enjoined on my companions that they should remain at
 "this court until he dispatch another ambassador to You, and that they should notify to
 "him the glorious progress that Your arms will make and any other matter . . . that You
 "may deign to hint to them, and that they should fulfil Your wish in everything. . . .
 "However, I entreat You to be pleased to let them enjoy Your goodwill and favour and
 "royal protection, being sure that You will receive the like in the persons of Your subjects
 "whether from the Pontiff or the other Christian princes. And I assure You that these
 "my companions will not ask of You either gold, or clothing, or supplies of food or the
 "smallest thing, except for a house suitable for a residence and Divine worship according
 "to Christian rites, to be rented or purchased by them. . . ."

"Finally, I have judged it expedient to suggest, as a very timely measure to move and
 "incite the sentiments of the princes of Christendom against the Turk that, besides the
 "replies Your Majesty may send to the Pope, the Emperor Rudolph, Sigismund king of
 "Poland, Cardinal Cinthius and the Marquis de Villena, other letters should be written
 "to the king of the Spains, to the republics of Venice and Genoa, and to the Grand Duke
 "of Tuscany, communicating to them the great and signal victories won by You up till

"now against the Turk, and inviting them to join their arms to Yours to the hurt of that common enemy. . . ."

To continue the narrative of Fr. Paul Simon, after Shah 'Abbas had told him to sign the 'Note Verbale' translated above:

". . . He ('Abbas I) said that he would give a written answer and would affix to it 'the same 'secret' seal, which he had given to the Englishman, which would serve as a 'countersign of the letters he would write to Your Holiness and the Christian princes, 'who in future should give no credit to his letters, unless the countersign in question were 'on them: and he said that he would send me the reply with the letter for Your Holiness 'and those for the other Christian princes. He bade the Wazir have it written at once, 'as we desired, and send it after him, in order that he might affix his seal, because he had 'to leave the same day. When the Wazir read to him the sixth point, in which he recommended to him, in the name of Your Holiness, the Christians, especially the Armenians 'his subjects, he said to me: 'You are witness of the affection I bear for Christians', and 'that he had dispatched the cross, which we presented to him (as a gift), to the king of 'Georgia, and that there was for the patriarch a cross of wood which was then being made 'for him with his own hands." (This allusion is obscure, unless it refers to the patriarch of the Armenians, and 'Abbas I's intention to have him deposed for reasons already mentioned). "But he went on to say that the Captain of Hurmuz was robbing his (the 'Persian) merchants who went there, was carrying off Muhammadan boys and making 'them Christians by force, and doing them other injuries which he mentioned. He begged 'Your Holiness to give instructions that that should not be done. He then put me some 'questions, firstly, whether Your Holiness had ordered the Augustinian Fathers to change 'the faith of the Armenians, which for more than 1,000 years they had kept, and to make 'them into Portuguese. I made answer that Your Holiness had not given orders for it, 'because the ancient faith of the Armenians was the same as our own, neither did Your 'Holiness desire it to be changed: that Your Holiness would feel displeasure at the annoyance caused to his Majesty over that, even though it was not the fault of the Augustinian 'Fathers, who had never had any intention that the Armenians should change their faith, 'that the Armenians had not (rightly) understood them. He added 'I take it kindly that 'His Holiness has not given such instructions: tell him what the Fathers' (i.e. the Augustinians) "'have done.' Secondly, he inquired of me: 'If the Portuguese Fathers' (so he calls the Augustinians) "'tell me one thing, and your Fathers who are remaining here' (i.e. the Carmelites) "'tell me another, which of them am I to believe?' I answered that 'I hoped to God the Augustinian Fathers and our own would never disagree; but, in 'case it should happen, his Majesty had perspicacity and would know from the letters 'which the one and the other group had brought him, and should act accordingly. He 'turned to his nobles, and said: 'I wish to show favour to the Fathers from the Pope'. 'Finally, he told me that Latin Christians committed insolences and injustices in his realm: 'who was to punish them? I think he enquired this because Pope Clement VIII, the 'Emperor and the king of Poland wrote to him to allow us to visit Christians who were in, 'and might go to Persia. I replied that Religious could not punish (wrongdoers), that 'Your Holiness would send a person to do so, as he had at the courts of the sovereigns of 'Christendom, because he desired that malefactors should be punished. He ('Abbas I) 'said that that would please him, and that I should ask Your Holiness in his name for this.

"With regard to the two Fathers, my companions, he replied that they should remain 'in Isfahan, and continue to pray for him until he ordered otherwise. He directed that 'another, and a good house should be allotted them, because the first was inconvenient 'for (making) a church or chapel in it, and that I should leave to go to Your Holiness 'directly the dispatches¹ were handed me, and he told me to write to him at every oppor-

¹ *Despachi* is the Italian word used; this in 1608 for essentially diplomatic correspondence ! !

"tunity the progress of my journey, and not to do, as so many others who had been to Persia had done, viz. leave with promises to come back" (but had not done so). "He directed his councillors to order the Head of the Armenians of Julfa (the Armenians of Julfa are rich merchants, who have correspondents everywhere and are, as it were, the chief of the other Armenians) to give me men to conduct me safely to Aleppo," (threatening) "that if a hair" (of my head) "were lost, he would burn the 2,000 households¹ there were of them, without sparing women or children.

"Whilst I was with the Shah a courier reached him from his captain-general, Allah Virdi Khan,² who was then at 8 days' distance from Hurmuz and making preparations for war,³ with the news that 40 Dutch ships had arrived near Hurmuz.⁴ He told us about it, the Shah exhibiting delight at it. A few days later the Captain of Hurmuz, Don Peter Coutinho, sent another courier to the Fr. Prior of the Augustinians with similar news, begging him to write to him" (i.e. at Hurmuz) "with regard to the preparations for war, and the motives of the king of Persia. A little later the Shah set off for Mazandaran.

"The Wazir sent us to the house 1,500 scudi by orders of the king, and said that his Majesty would be displeased if we did not accept it, because Clement VIII had written him that we lived on alms. The Mihmandar (who brought the money) gets the tenth⁵ of whatever the Shah bestows on ambassadors: we gave it to him, and as much again for being a servant of his Majesty who would be able to assist us in affairs of Christians and those of the Fathers remaining in Persia a great deal, as in fact he does. Out of that money we gave his (the Mihmandar's) servants and our interpreters 130 scudi, as it was inconvenient to meet this from our own funds, as we were short of money. We sent back to the Wazir the 1,000 scudi odd which remained over, saying that we accepted them, but begged his lordship to distribute them among the poor, so that they might pray for his Majesty's good health, for at the time we ourselves stood in need of nothing. Other governors in Persia, like the one at Shirwan, presented us with horses and money, but from no one did we accept anything except victuals, when given us—of this I have brought a certificate from the Augustinian Fathers and Don Robert the Englishman, who were present when we sent back the money that the Shah had sent to our house. . . . After some days the Shah forwarded to me the letters . . . so that I might depart. . . ."

If the Persian original of the reply in writing to the 'Note Verbale', promised by 'Abbas I, were taken to Europe by Fr. Paul Simon, it has escaped the present search in the archives of the Vatican and the Carmelites: there remains only a version in Italian,⁶ and with the missionaries no longer young and novices in the Persian language it is permissible to doubt the accuracy of translation: this runs:

(After friendly compliments) "I have been for a long time past in alliance with the Christian princes, as you yourselves have now too suggested, to my satisfaction, how greatly I ought to be pleased with their goodwill and give my own in exchange. For if, as I consider certain, what you have related and testified to me be true—that the Sovereign Pontiff together with the Christian princes desires to enlist a large army and send it against the Turks, they will know on what side (it be best) to attack them. But, should they be of a mind to invade the enemy's frontiers by two routes, there is no doubt but

¹ This, doubtless not an exact figure, and perhaps very wide of the mark as usual in Persian estimates of figures, might mean a total of 8,000–10,000 souls, four years after the Armenians were settled at the new Julfa.

² This was the father of Imam Quli Khan, before him also 'viceroy' or governor-general of Fars and the South, (renegade) Christian Armenian by race, but of the country of the Georgians—see della Valle, letter of 22.4.1619.

³ Was this demonstration against the Portuguese at Gãmburn? in advance of that actually pushed home in 1614?

⁴ This was perhaps one of the first, or the very first, occasion for a Dutch fleet to penetrate the waters of the Persian Gulf, where before long they were to become masters. 'Abbas I's delight was at the thought of playing them off against the Portuguese.

⁵ An interesting point in court life at Isfahan with foreign envoys, surviving perhaps till the late eighteenth century.

⁶ Vide Fr. Eusebius ab Omni. Sancti. in *MSS Hist. Miss.*, O.C.D. chapter 27, book 1.

"that it is expedient to take that of Aleppo. Immediately, then, that they have made a "move in that direction, We shall proceed by that of Diarbakr (Mesopotamia), for the "mere reason that Aleppo is very far distant from our empire. With the help of God I "shall then advance on Constantinople with such a force that those cruel enemies will "not be able to hold on to it, or defend it against my assault.

"The Sovereign Pontiff promised to send me men trained in war, and skilled in engines "(artillery), so that in the military operations they may give either instructions" (in the use of them) "or their (active) help. Should he keep his promise, it would be a most "acceptable thing to me. However, let one point be realized by you, viz. that by the "grace of God, to whom be all praise for it, I have ready such an army that I am able to "take action against the enemy at my convenience. Do you also attack them, as I am "already in movement with it: and, even should you fail to give me assistance with your "troops, with mine I am sufficiently able not only to assault and drive back the enemy, "but to break, kill and destroy them.

"But as regards what the Sovereign Pontiff writes to me, I believe it, deeming it to be "most true, without any doubt: and therefore when he sends me someone as his ambassador "I shall appoint another to reside at his court. I now send you, in the guise of an 'am- "bassador extraordinary' Don Robert Sherley, an English gentleman, very dear to me for "his having served me faithfully many years, a man endowed with much sagacity and "worth. . . . I should have sent one of my own subjects, if the aforesaid had not been "desired and asked of me by the Sovereign Pontiff and the Emperor.

"To Christians, who are my subjects and live in my dominions, I give no light demon- "stration of my humanity and protection. I benefit very many of them, nor do I allow "anyone to be forced to become a Muslim and to profess the Muhammadan religion, "that being altogether opposed to my faith. Quite to the contrary, the Captain of Hurmuz "carries off the property of Muhammadan merchants who make voyages to that island, "and indeed surreptitiously makes slaves of them and forces them to embrace the Christian "Faith. Let the Sovereign Pontiff write to him, I beg, so that in future he shall abstain "from these wrongs and outrages which he inflicts on me and my vassals.

"I have already given sanction to Fr. Paul Simon to leave as soon as possible, and repair "to Rome by the shortest route. The two companions whom he leaves behind to remain "here will reside in Isfahan: and, should it happen to them to need to speak to me about "anything, they will be able to do so on any day they please. I have replied to all the "letters, both for the Pope and for the other Christian princes, and given orders so that "he may deliver them safely. If I ought to do anything else, notify me, and I shall do it."

The official reply which Fr. Paul Simon carried back to Rome is also missing from the archives in the original Persian—before 1622 and the creation of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide oriental documents, especially if works of fine penmanship, enclosed in ornamental purses, doubtless often drifted into the libraries and collections of manuscripts of individual cardinals, such as the Borghese collection, and either were sought after by the few orientalist scholars then in Europe, or destroyed as illegible. A translation or paraphrase, so called, had, however, been supplied to Rome by Fr. John Thaddeus (who became the chief translator among the Carmelites) before the original left Persia.¹ In substance it differs little from the 'Note Verbale' reply furnished by the Shah, as translated above, but is reproduced here for the sake of completeness of the correspondence:

"In the name of Allah and of the great 'Ali to the Pope of Rome.

"Most spacious majesty, and mighty and powerful ruler. May Your grandeur, O most "excellent and pious prince, in all things ever increase and become a hundred times greater "than it is. Your rule is ordered after the manner of the heavenly realm. Your exaltedness "is placed in the greatest star of the sky. Just as the stars in their course move in succession,

¹ It is quoted in *A Persia*, vol. II, p. 129; and by Fr. Eusebius in *Hist. Miss.*

“so Your host which in numbers easily exceeds all the rest, and in greatness equals the firmament. Wherefore I acknowledge You a monarch such that Your crown reaches the circumference of the heavens, the greatest of all kings, the supreme Bishop of Rome, most illustrious of Christians, the most true Vicar of Jesus Christ. All the attributes mentioned above are concentrated in You, O most learned interpreter of the Gospel and of the Psalms, whose sacred person is elevated above all the Christian kings and princes, whose mind, endowed with singular wisdom, knows admirably how to direct all Christian nations, whose kingdom is preserved by Heaven.

“With these premisses I consider it my duty to declare to You Our friendliness towards You and to inform You of the sincere love that We bear for You. And so You should take for truth what has been said before and what is later to be said, and as coming not only from my mouth but also from my heart, I being one and the same thing with You. And just as Your wisdom after the manner of the sun shines over all, as You are raised above all Christians by Your goodness and singular worth, so now my sincerity will shine.

“Father Paul Simon and the two other Fathers his companions, men of religion . . . sent by Your Holiness with letters of recommendation, have at last arrived here. They have delivered and faithfully explained to me the business committed to them in regard to the Turkish nation. Both verbally and in writing they have notified me how Your Holiness ardently desires that we should together, You on Your side, I on mine, make war on the Turks, our common enemies, either to destroy them altogether, or at least to humble them. They have further revealed to us that with much forethought Your Holiness is trying to make an agreement among the Christian princes in order that, having mustered armies, they may attack the empire of the enemy on many sides. Without doubt they know better than I on what front it suits them to assail him.

“As far as concerns Us, from the time when We took up arms against this evil and detestable race and made war on it, We have certainly done our duty, as is evident to everyone, seeing that there is no one who does not know how many provinces We have taken from them by force of arms. We are ready to do the like now with a countless army of warriors. In the future I would not be only the adversary and implacable enemy of this most foul people, but its most ruthless butcher and destroyer, for my part.

“In whatever direction, therefore, it may suit You to push forward the army to inflict the greater loss on the enemy, You must judge: I only beg You not to delay setting it in movement. If You decide to invade him on two sides, the one by Aleppo, the other whichever may appear to You best for harassing the more cruelly and crushing the more forcibly our adversaries, I shall consider it the wiser and more prudent plan, and hold it a matter most pleasing to me and worthy of our sincere friendship.

“Your Holiness has further ordered that the aforesaid Fr. Paul Simon should return as quickly as possible to Your court, and, hearing this, We have immediately given him leave and dispatched him. We have kept the other two and out of respect for Your warm recommendations We shall treat them with singular honour and kindness, and order that they be similarly treated by Our subjects.

“I had thought to dispatch with the abovenamed Father one of my confidants, loyal and prudent; but at his instance I have nominated Don Robert Sherley, . . . who has already for long past been in my service, and therefore I have considered him without any doubt to be worthy of my confidence. He is to be esteemed as being of the Christian religion. Besides he is very well versed in Our affairs, which he knows perfectly by long experience, and so will be able to explain them all to Your Holiness and establish and conclude between us a firm and lasting league of friendship.

“The real method to keep it will be this: that we reciprocally inform each other what should best be done, and proceed together in all events that shall befall. This I desire to be done in complete and perfect goodwill. The aforesaid gentleman and Our ambassador will set forth more fully and completely Our views about the business, of which We write to Your Holiness, so that You will be able to give him Your entire confidence,

"as You would do to myself, seeing that he stands in our place and represents Our person. "He similarly will inform Us by letters of events occurring and whatever Your Holiness "may wish and desire, and We shall carry it out immediately We are apprised by Your "hint. There is nothing further to say except only to wish You health and everlasting "happiness.

"Given from the city of Isfahan in the month of Ramazan of the year of Muhammad "1016."¹

There crossed this letter and messages from the Persian monarch to the Sovereign Pontiff on the subject of joint operations against the Turks two Papal Briefs, both dated 11.3.1608 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 3, pages 163 and 168 (Nos. 424 and 425)), the one entrusted to Archbishop Matthew Erasmus of Nakhchiwan returning to his diocese, the other to a Spaniard, John of Avila: in each case the Pope encouraged 'Abbas I to continue to harass the Turks, referring to his previous Brief carried by the Carmelite Fathers. They said in fact:

"Illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas, king of the Persians greeting and the light "of Divine grace.

"By the opportunity of this venerable brother of Ours, Matthew Erasmus, Archbishop "of the province of Nakhchiwan in Greater Armenia, who with Our blessing is returning "to the flock given into his trust, We in accordance with the singular kindness with which "We attend Your Highness were desirous to salute You with this letter of Ours in order "to tell You of Our especial goodwill for You, of the eagerness and longing that holds Us "to continue those offices of affection and regard with which Our predecessor of happy "memory, Clement VIII, and You, most puissant king, mutually used to cherish Your "friendship.

"Now this desire of Ours We have also sufficiently indicated from the start of Our "Pontificate by other letters of Ours which We gave to be handed You to Our beloved "sons, the Religious, servants of God, Paul Simon, John Thaddeus and Vincent, priests "and brothers of the Carmelite Order, who at that time were by Our command pursuing "their journey into Persia which they had begun at the bidding of Our predecessor.

"From this venerable brother of Ours, therefore, You will understand how great a debt "We acknowledge to owe You on account of the kindness and benevolence with which "You treat Our sons, the faithful of Christ, dwelling in Your far-flung realms, and how "heartily We desire to be able in some degree to repay You an equal favour. Since We "cannot do this in any other fashion, We beg for You from the Lord with the greatest affection "of which We are capable that He give you true happiness.

"And, since We gather that the war You are waging against the most savage Ottoman "tyrant is proceeding prosperously, We do not cease to beg Almighty God to strengthen "and increase by the right hand of His power the might and bravery of Your soldiers, "but on the other hand to crush and scatter the armed forces of Our mutual enemies; "even as We likewise exhort Our dearest sons of the Christian kings to get ready themselves "to march against him in Europe while You bravely and nobly keep the enemy tied in "Asia. For trusting in God's mercy We hope that this will come to pass one day, especially "if peace continue between Us and Your arms make successful advances. But more anon "both concerning these matters and concerning Our regard for You will be told Your "Highness by the same venerable brother Archbishop Matthew, whom We earnestly "commend to You as Our brother and a faithful servant of God, and very fond of You "and esteeming You, as likewise We commend to You with all the bowels of Our love the "whole body of Our Christian sons who live in Your very broad and mighty kingdom, so "that helped by Your kindness and favour they may be able to serve to greater advantage

¹ The first part of January 1608 fell within Ramazan 1016 A.H.: the Italian text is responsible for the changes from the first person singular to first person plural: 'Abbas' style (more in the plural form) is to be seen in his letter *re* Miranda quoted.

"God and Our Saviour, to Whom We pray that He may ever keep You under the shelter
"of His grace, and bring and order all Your plans and works to the furtherance of Your
"true salvation.

"Given at Rome at S. Peter's, under the Fisherman's Ring (fifth of the Ides of March),
"11th March, 1608, in the third year of Our Pontificate."

The other was worded:

"Some three years ago almost We wrote to Your Highness by Our beloved sons Paul
"Simon, John Thaddeus and Vincent, Religious of the Carmelite fraternity, who by Our
"command were accelerating the journey to Persia undertaken at the bidding of Clement
"VIII, Our predecessor of happy memory; and We by Our letter signified to You the
"immense joy which We derived from Your victories and triumphs, and how We heartily
"liked You and likewise desired to keep up the observances of mutual regard, which
"passed between Our predecessor and Your Highness.

"But because We have not yet learnt whether Our said sons have reached You, We are
"kindled by an ever greater desire to show You Our affection and have taken the timely
"opportunity offered by this beloved son (of Ours) John of Avila, the Spaniard, who has
"told Us he wishes now to return to You, by whom he was sent to Us with Your letter and
"commissions (but he explained to Us that it had been seized and taken away from him
"by brigands); to him We have willed to give Your Highness this letter, a witness to Our
"genuine attachment and goodwill. This man has told Us distinctly many things about
"Your uncommon kindness to Our sons the Christian faithful, who live in Your very ex-
"tensive kingdom, and that all, who come to You from Our countries, are received there
"in a benign and friendly manner indiscriminately, a fact which certainly has bound to
"You so much the more closely Our liking and goodwill.

"May You therefore be rewarded by the Lord to Whom We always pray for Your true
"bliss, just as We also do for the happy outcome of the Wars, which You unremittingly
"wage against a common enemy and a perpetual foe of all called Christians, the Ottoman
"Tyrant, of Your triumphing over whom so many times and gaining such splendid and
"brilliant victories We have heard with supreme delight.

"For this reason also We exhort You never to slacken war until You crush the forces of
"this fierce beast in Asia, by which the more easily Our very dear sons the Christian kings
"may attack him in Europe. In sooth just as We passionately long for this, so when it
"shall please Divine providence—nor do We despair that it will happen before long—
"with the greatest eagerness of mind We shall take steps to get it done.

"Meanwhile to Your most potent arms there shall be joined Our most ardent prayers
"to God for Your victories. However, if We should be able to furnish anything else and
"You let Us know this in some way, We shall take pains that You comprehend how greatly
"at heart to Us are all Your affairs, and how desirous We are of Your success and satis-
"faction. On this matter the same beloved son John of Avila will bring You still more
"information; and though We think he is well enough known to You, having personally
"spoken much to Us about Your generosity to himself, yet We ask You to give him for
"Our sake a very kind reception. May Almighty God the Father of mercies grant You
"by the light of His holy grace brave and noble resolutions, and also order and dispose
"Your deeds to the praise of His most holy Name and to Your own true salvation.

"Given at S. Peter's, Rome, under the Fisherman's Ring, the fifth of the Ides of March
"(11th March, 1608) in the third year of Our Pontificate."

Although Fr. Paul Simon moved out of Isfahan on 26.2.1608, the caravan did not actually
quit the neighbourhood till 3.3.1608. In the meantime he had received from the Wazir a
passport recommending him to all and sundry within the Shah's realm and four 'books' in
the Persian language as a present from the monarch for Cardinal Cinthius, who had asked for

them. On his part he had left various written directions for his two companions, dated 12.2.1608, to wit—they were to endeavour to obtain a signed and sealed order from 'Abbas I to the effect that no one save his Majesty might intervene in the affairs of the Carmelites, that they be authorized to circulate freely in the country, that they should report to Rome punctually any matter of importance, especially over the treatment of the Armenians.

Till the eve of his departure the headman of Julfa was uncertain whether to dispatch the travellers by Tabriz or Baghdad, but the latter route was chosen: Fr. Paul Simon was given as a disguise the clothing a poor Armenian would wear and a miserable mount to suit the part: all that he took with him was a quilt, the 'books' mentioned, the diary of his mission, the dispatches from the Shah, and a little money. With his guides he remained some miles from the city in a *manzil*—a halting-place for caravans—till on 3.3.1608 the caravan was ready to start. In many cases it is impossible to identify from the spelling of the Genoese Father the Persian names of the stages travelled daily; but what does impress the reader of his manuscript is the deserted condition of this road to the western frontier, the poverty and misery of the hamlets passed. For seven days, together with his Armenian guides, traders who were on their way to Aleppo to sell four loads of silk, he had to make his quarters in the hut of a peasant five leagues from Hamadan because the caravan was halting for the celebration of the Nauruz equinox festival of the 21st March. On the 24th they were at Kangawar, where there was then no caravansarai: and they passed a stream without a bridge. On the 25th they were at Sahen (or Sakineh, ? *sic*), a small hamlet 6 leagues from Kangawar, having crossed at the first mile a stream where during the night robbers had carried off loads from the camels. The road was flat and uninhabited. There was another small and good caravansarai at the entrance of that village, where bread, rice and corn were obtained. There provisions were laid in for the march to Hasan Khan [? *sic*], four days away—the country being quite uninhabited. It was 7 leagues from Sakineh [? *sic*] to Shirinu (can this be Qasr-i-Shirin?), where there were but four or five habitations, though a new and fine caravansarai had been built by Shah 'Abbas: the road deserted. Numbers of Kurdish nomads were however seen in their tents (*oba*): one mile before they reached Shirinu, a broad river, over which was an ancient bridge in ruins, was crossed. Seven leagues farther on, at Pul-i-Shah they found a 'sultan' (i.e. a captain) with 500 soldiers guarding the pass—the country uninhabited. Four leagues from Pul-i-Shah over a mountainous road was Buzgudar: then another 12 leagues¹ lay ahead to make Hasan Sultan, a march of two days still in hilly country. Another day brought them to Darbangand [? *sic*] over a very bad road, to which there was no alternative, all around being high mountains: a stream, the Gande, was passed. It was Easter-day. From Darbangand to Dissa [? *sic*] there were 4 leagues of very bad road: the travellers camped in the open, having nothing except bread and cheese to eat. The following day there arrived a captain with 4,000 mounted men on his way to plunder the neighbourhood of Baghdad, seven days' journey distant: the leaders of the caravan felt obliged to turn back, fearing lest it should be taken from them in Baghdad on account of their being subjects of the king of Persia, as had happened in the previous year when the same captain had similarly gone to raid the country. . . . Here, Fr. Paul Simon's own words may be allowed to resume, with their vivid details of perils encountered and the utter devastation and insecurity of the region:

" . . . I had a talk with the captain, showed him the passport I had from the king, and explained how I was proceeding on his service, saying that, as the caravan was turning back, "he being an officer of the Shah should tell me what I ought to do. . . . He sent for me "to go to his tent and told me that the Shah was not then marching against Baghdad, "as was said by the people, that he would not tell me a falsehood: transit would be very "risky. . . . He gave me a man to return with me to the caravan, where I had the letters "and books, so that I might get them, and bade the man bring me back at once to wherever "he would be.

"The 'sultan' left, marching in haste with his column, which was following him, to the

¹ His "leagues" doubtless refer to the Persian *farsakhs*—*parasangs* of the ancients—varying from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 miles.

"frontiers between the Persians and the Turks, three days' distance from Baghdad, where "it was due to join the army: while I with the guide went to the caravan. I took the letters "and at once we mounted and rode all the night long and the next day in order to catch "up the captain. We did 20 leagues and found him towards evening of the following day, "one mile from the frontier boundary. He sent for me and bade me sit down near him. "Hardly had I dismounted than it was necessary to march on again, without my having had "a rest or eaten during the 20 leagues¹ we had done. It was all uninhabited country, being "on the frontier and mountainous. The captain told me that one mile further on he would "halt, in order to assault a neighbouring town by night, and thence he would raid the "country as far as Baghdad: he told me to stop there with some soldiers who would be "left to guard their things until his return which would be in two or three days' time. "From having marched the whole day and the previous night without feed or rest my horse "was unable to go any farther, so I could not follow the 'sultan'. That night I remained "with 3 or 4 soldiers, I did not know whether friends or enemies, in the open, fearing every "hour to be captured by Turks, within whose territory and frontiers we already were. "In the morning together with ten other soldiers, who had kept us company for the night, "we went to look for the captain: we reached the place where the baggage was and found "he had left. I had brought nothing to eat with me: we were in the desert: and the soldiers "were without anything for themselves, because each one was carrying only a little flour, "as we were marching with such speed. I did not dare to let myself be seen by anyone "as we were on the Turkish frontier, and a large town called Mandali² was only a mile "away, and we were expecting attack any hour. The Turks did not do so, because they "took this to be the army of the king of Persia, and he himself with it. We waited for the "captain there four days, in which we ate wild thistles and the little flour or grain which "one of them gave me out of charity. Finally every man's provisions were exhausted "and there were no more thistles to be found. I had left the quilt in the caravan, and "they had robbed me of the felt³ I had, so that at night I suffered much from the cold, and "at times I was soaked by the rain. . . . Some 'Turks' in the town near by . . . had "compassion on me, and gave me some wild thistles which they were collecting. On the "fourth day the 'captain' returned with great booty—10,000 sheep, 1,000 horses, many "oxen, cows, buffaloes, some boys and women prisoners, and other spoils.

"I went to see him: he told me that it was impossible to get through, because I could "see for myself how he had plundered them, so that the whole countryside was up, and "they would not allow anyone coming from Persia" (to pass). "I commended myself "to the Lord, and had a talk with his confidential man, whose palms I had first greased, "begging him to persuade the captain to give me a guide, determined to go through to "Baghdad. He did so and came to tell me that the captain had sent for me, and that "it would be necessary to make him a gift of something. I went there, and presented to "him one of those gold medals, weighing 17 sequins, which Pope Clement VII had given "us, and another 10 sequins. He made me sup with him: then we went into his tent. "He warned me of the great danger there was in going to Baghdad: if however I were "determined to go, he would give me a Darwish to accompany me, but it would be necessary "to leave behind the horse and everything else, and go clothed as a poor man.

"I answered that I would do anything. He had brought to me a pair of drawers of "black drill torn in rags, and a shirt in a thousand pieces, a small cap, no shoes or stockings "but only a piece of leather to be tied to the soles of my feet with string: in a knapsack were "the books which the Shah of Persia was sending for Cardinal Cinthius, the Bible in which "I had the letters from the king, a breviary, the diary of my journey, two vocabularies, "one of Russian, the other of Turkish words, the letters and a little bread and cheese

¹ At least 75 miles.

² This would appear to be Mandali, the usual habitat of the Wali of Pusht-i-Kuh, a great tribal magnate, in recent times.

³ The Persian *namad*, sleeveless cloaks of wool macerated into stiff felt, as worn by shepherds and tribesmen keep one warm.

"which the captain gave us for the road. The horse and everything else I left for the captain: he asked me whether I wanted money for the journey. I thanked him: he displayed a great deal of greed in wanting to see what I was leaving and in having it kept in his tent: I told him that I was not carrying money because I should find Franks in Baghdad who would supply me with what was needed.

"He then summoned the Darwish in question, an old man, and said to him: 'You have to conduct this Frank darwish to Baghdad: take whatever money you may need'. The Darwish made excuses saying that he would not undertake it, that we should be killed, etc., etc., to which the captain said that he had got to go, and, should anyone on the road enquire who I were, that he should answer that I was a Frank 'darwish' who had been looted by the Persians, and that I was going to Baghdad to find the other Franks there. One hour before daybreak the captain went off towards his land, the old man and I on our journey: the old man was carrying a skin of water,¹ I the knapsack on our shoulders. We did not venture to pass by the neighbouring town of Mandali, but crossed some mountains and marched the whole day in the open country, avoiding the road in order not to be seen. In the evening we drew near the road again, in order not to lose it, but in the morning kept it at a distance. We walked on for two days very successfully till we got beyond the frontier zone: when we descried anyone from afar off, we threw ourselves down on the ground in the grass, or in the corn. The third day we set out along the road, met some men, who at once came at me with sticks. When they saw that in the knapsack there were books and I was in rags and feeble, and the Darwish told them that I had been looted by the Persians, they allowed us to go on. I was afraid they would take away from me the few tatters I wore, and leave me naked, as some of their men were: so, when I used to see men afar off I would rip up and tear the drawers and shirt still more, so much so that, when I reached Baghdad, I had my flesh everywhere exposed to the daylight. Those men told us that a mile farther on there were more Arabs on the road who would allow no one to pass without first stopping him. I commended myself to the Lord. I had a belt with 150 sequins, and two of the gold medals, given us by Pope Clement VIII which I was taking with me. I made two pieces of the belt so as to tie it to my legs. Suddenly 15 soldiers came on me: when I saw them I threw down on the ground a piece of the belt which I had in my hands, and in which were 50 sequins and the two gold medals, and put my foot on it. One of them saw it, and took it and made a sign to me with his finger to say nothing. The others looked into the knapsack, saying that I was a Persian and they would do this and that to me. The Darwish told them that they had looted me: the man who had taken the belt also added that they had better go, afraid (no doubt) lest I should reveal this and he should be obliged to share it with his companions. They went off, and greatly relieved we continued our journey. A little after we reached a place where there were Arabs, who charged at us with staves, as if we had been bears. Seeing us poor, and that in the knapsack there were only books, they left us alone. On the fourth day the same thing happened: from hour to hour we came across men who stopped us. At 22 o'clock² we reached a hamlet called Baris [*sic*] on the bank of a large river. There they gave us a little barley bread by way of charity, and it seemed to us that we had reached Paradise, because we had as much water" (as we wanted). "All these four days we had marched well, eating bread and drinking a little water, because the vessel we carried was small. During the daytime tried by the heat, at night by the cold, sleeping under the open sky on the ground, although but little because of the fright lest someone should come. With so much walking my feet were swollen, and the guide had a knee which stopped him. In order to get away from the Arabs we crossed the river by boat that night and slept in the open on the other bank. In the morning my Darwish could not walk and I, in addition to the ill condition of my feet and my feebleness, felt feverish: we had nothing to eat except a little badly baked

¹ This may be the *mashk*—the small sheep- or goat-skin which wayfarers in dry districts take with them. the Italian word is *corozza*.

² Presumably about 4 in the afternoon.

"barley-bread. I commended myself to the Lord and resolved to go that same day to Baghdad, 8 leagues away. I joined company with some men on their way there: they were on horseback, and trotting in order to arrive in daylight, so it was necessary for me too to 'trot', as I had no guide with me and did not know the road.

"I reached Baghdad, 20th April (1608), with fever, more dead than alive. The guards at the gate ran to see who I was. Unable to go a step more, I sat down and told them that I was a Frank. When they saw me so poor and weak, they had compassion on me, and sent a man to show me a hospice or caravansarai where, they said, there were a number of Franks. They had all gone. There was a gentile there who knew how to speak Portuguese, and who kept me there that night and sent one of his people to buy me something to eat. In the morning with my money he purchased for me a shirt, a pair of drawers, a tunic and shoes, etc., and directed me to the shop of a Hebrew, who could talk Spanish and was friendly with Franks. This Hebrew received me courteously, engaged a room for me and from his house sent food for me. During the ten days I was in Baghdad every day we were together and ate together . . . he told me of a renegade Maltese, who was on close terms with the Pasha and professed to show favour to Franks. I went to seek him. . . . I was continually in a fright and, although I still had fever, sickness and diarrhoea, I determined to leave. We found a trusty courier, who has a wife and house in Baghdad, an Arab, acquainted with the desert, who contracted to guide me across the desert to Aleppo in 40 days. He wanted 30 gold ducats. So that he should not play some trick, the renegade Maltese (who called himself Ja'far Bashi) . . . disbursed part of the money, binding himself to pay the balance whenever he (the guide) returned with a letter from me. He purchased for me a mule for 30 piastres, a little biscuit and provender for the journey, but with my money, and obtained permission from the Pasha for this courier to leave—all this with much charitableness. He compelled me to stay for two days before my departure in his house, where he entertained me with fowls, although I could not eat. . . . On the 1st May (1608) I had myself bled, and although I could not stand . . . I slept the night in the house of the courier on the other side of the river.

"Baghdad is as large as Naples, but with a small population. There are many ruined buildings. The country is very fertile, there is an abundance of supplies and a good market: there is no wine, but many dates. Through the middle of it flows the river Tigris, which contains many good fish. . . . The inhabitants of Baghdad are 'Turks' by creed: they appear a good folk and know three languages—Persian, Turkish and Arabic, which is their natural tongue. Formerly it was a city with great trade on account of the caravans arriving from India and passing by to go to Aleppo; but now it is ruined, because the Pasha, who is in rebellion against the Sultan of Turkey, in order to pay his soldiery has robbed and killed the richest merchants, the others have fled, and out of fear caravans no longer go to Baghdad. *"The Pasha is a young man—he was a private soldier, who by violence became Pasha. He has 12,000 soldiers (rebels against the Turk) and he leans on the Shah of Persia, and a few months ago slew another (Pasha), whom the Sultan was sending to govern the city, massacring all the fifty men whom that man had brought as escort, and appropriating what they had.*

"On the 2nd May I quitted Baghdad: we travelled 13 days to Aleppo, always by the desert, only touching the road half-way at Ana, an Arab town situated on the banks of the Euphrates, where I slept in the house of a Hebrew. All the rest of the way was desert, where we saw no one, nor was there any road. . . . The countryside is but little inhabited, and the few people there are Arab shepherds living in tents near the Euphrates. Every day in May the heat was exceedingly great: they had reaped the corn a month previously in Baghdad. We slept in the open, our food biscuit and water. We marched day and night, and did not rest for more than 4 hours in the day. Caravans do this journey in one month and mostly along the bank of the river Euphrates. . . . The Lord God was gracious to me, in that, although I had set out with fever and was very weak,

"on the second day I felt better, eating biscuits—there was nothing else. Some Arabs "came to rob us, but seeing us so poor went off. Four days away from Aleppo we met a "caravan and that night remained to sleep with it for greater security. The diary and "other books I was carrying were in a pair of knapsacks together with the biscuit for us "and the fodder for the mule. The letters and Bible I kept always tied to my body. The "courier (guide) put the knapsacks under his head: four robbers came, tried to take them "and, being unable to do so, one of them gave the guide a heavy blow on the head with a "stick; stunned, the guide raised himself up, and the robbers fled away with the knapsacks. "I did what I could to get back the books, but nothing could be effected. I remained "without the books, without biscuit and without fodder. The mule was tired and could "not walk because it had nothing to eat. We had to go three days and nights on foot to "find water and arrived on 14th May at Aleppo, I with my feet swollen and lacerated. "I went to lodge with the Franciscan Fathers, making a donation of the mule to their " 'Casa santa' in Jerusalem, as I had designed, should God do me the mercy of my not "being robbed of it. And it was a great favour which God granted me, because, if the "mule had been taken away from me, in my weak state I could no longer have walked on "my feet: the guide would not have waited, since we had neither bread nor water: so I "should have perished there and not have been the first. . . . I took the habit of S. "Francis in order to be safer and able to say Mass. The Father Guardian was kind to me "and gave me for the habit two pieces of cloth, valued at 12 piastres, which he recovered "from me.

"Aleppo . . . the whole countryside is full of rebels. For 8 months past the captain- "general of the Sultan's (army) had been in Aleppo together with the Agha of the Janissaries, "the Baiglarbaigi, and all the military forces he could gather, perhaps some 60,000 men. "He had come to silence the rebels, but had done little, merely driven off from the town "its rebel Pasha . . . and he dared not depart, for fear lest the rebels should recapture "the town. When I was leaving, the Sultan had sent for him to go in haste to Constanti- "nople. He was very severe. . . . In Aleppo I twice went in peril of my life; the first "time because in Baghdad the renegade Maltese gave me a letter from the Pasha to the "merchants (of Aleppo) urging them to go to Baghdad, saying that he would not maltreat "them. (In Aleppo I was advised not to deliver it, as it came from a rebel and might "easily have caused me some trouble, and I did not do so.) The (Turkish) General learnt "that I had brought a letter from the Pasha of Baghdad, and sent one of his men for it "to be given him, and they wanted to put me in prison. But, thanks to God and to my "being in the habit of a Religious and to a Venetian merchant I escaped, because this "latter said that I was a Religious and knew nothing about such things.

"In the other case I was in greater peril. Some Venetians were talking in the public "square about my having come from the king of Persia and my carrying letters from him: "and there were some Janissaries standing by. God willed that they did not overhear it, "for otherwise no one save God could have saved me, for the General wanted to hang an "Englishman, merely because he had come from Persia and someone had said he was a "spy; and, although there was a consul for the English in Aleppo,¹ who was on friendly "terms with the General, who shows him much favour, and, although the man could "prove that he was a trader and produce a passport he had from the Sultan, it cost "him great trouble to escape the danger, and he spent 700 scudi on presents for the "General.

"In Aleppo I met Dominic Fernandes, who was on his way to Persia, sent by the viceroy "of Naples with letters for the Shah, for the Englishman" (i.e. R. Sherley) "and two agents, "whom they were placing, one in Aleppo, the other in Baghdad, because they" (the Spanish "authorities) "were thinking of forwarding by couriers packets of letters that might come "from Persia—the agent in Baghdad on to Aleppo, and the agent in Aleppo on to Naples "by way of Constantinople—his Majesty being desirous of having correspondence

¹ Aleppo is one of the most ancient consular posts in the British service.

"continually coming from the Indies and Persia by way of Aleppo.¹ I opened the packet "which was going for the Englishman, having left instructions with the Fathers to open "all letters that might come for him. One of the agents had died, and the other had gone, "so I posted two other good ones, and wrote to the Father how they should negotiate with "the king of Persia as to certain business which the viceroy" (of Naples) "was writing to the "Englishman to discuss. Dominic Fernandes had been looted. I had him lent 100 scudi "by a merchant so that he might continue his journey.

"I made a bargain with a captain of a ship from Marseilles, which was due to sail from "Alexandretta at once, and gave him 17 piastres for the passage with food.² On 26.5.1608, "after dinner I left Aleppo with some Portuguese and Venetians . . . in Alexandretta "I dwelt in the house of the English vice-consul, Laurence Boche³ . . . in Alexandretta "there were 20 houses for the ships that came there from Marseilles, Venice and England. "On the 2nd June in the evening we embarked, and in that same ship there embarked "two Portuguese and that Englishman who was coming back from the Mogul's dominions, "and had obtained" (the concession for) "the ports from that monarch.⁴ On the 3rd we "left, and it appeared to us like being in Heaven when we saw ourselves at sea out of the "land of the Turks, where every moment I was fearing to be recognized. . . . Twice we "got ready to fight galliots, another time the wind took us 10 miles off Tunis, and we "thought then we might be made slaves. . . . The captain landed me on the 20th July "in Corsica on the beach 12 miles from Bastia, where we arrived next day . . . the "following day the galleys from Genoa arrived, and they disembarked me at Naples "on 25.7.1608. . . ."

This graphic narrative is valuable in that, among other matters of interest for the student of oriental history, it shows that in the middle of 'Abbas I's reign from the capital to the western or Turkish frontier was a desolate, abandoned tract, and the road far from secure on account of highway robbery and footpads; (ii) it shows that Baghdad had cut itself off from allegiance to Constantinople, the province of Aleppo in Syria also in a state of revolt, confirming at first hand the news reports from Constantinople quoted in previous pages of this work; (iii) it is arresting and impressive in its testimony to the utter lawlessness and devastation of a wide border zone between the two Muslim states resulting from the raiding policy over years of guerrilla warfare.

Fr. Paul Simon was still on board ship when, 20.7.1608,⁵ he wrote to the colleagues he had left behind in Persia in order to give them such news as he had:

"The day before yesterday, off Cagliari in Sardinia, we had news from a barque that "was coming from there that there were 18 galleys from Naples and Sicily and that they "were there awaiting those of Carlo D'Oria, the Florentine galleys, those of the Pope, and "eight from Marseilles, which had gone to take to Malta the brother of the Duc de Guise; "but it is not known for what place" (they are to sail), "perhaps for Tunis and Algiers, as "all those parts of Barbary have revolted against the Sultan of Turkey and driven out the "Governors he had sent to govern them. It is certain that the Emperor has not made "peace with the Turks, nor will he make it: the Signory of Venice has armed and fitted "out 100 galleys, they say, in order to conduct an expedition against the Turks, and it is "said that the Signory has entered the league of the Christian Princes which His Holiness "has made against the Turk, which is easy to credit, seeing that it is the king of France "on whom the Signory of Venice relies: and, in order that the peace and goodwill between "Spain and France may be firm, they say that a great marriage is being discussed between

¹ This is of interest as an attempt in 1604 to set up a quicker and more regular postal service between India and Spain: under the chapter 'Basra' in this work will be found more on that subject regarding the middle 1650's.

² Note cost of a sailing passage, Alexandretta-Marseilles, in 1608.

³ Alexandretta an English consular post in 1608, and the term or rank "vice-consul" in use: can the name be Butcher or Bookey?

⁴ Who can this enterprising Englishman have been?

⁵ O.C.D. 238 c.

"them—perhaps it will be the Dauphin of France with the Infanta of Spain: all this news "was told us by that boat which left Cagliari.

"There is no talk of the king of England entering the league: I do not know whether "Don Robert Sherley will go there, because the king has imprisoned his brother, who had "been in slavery" [*? sic* for 'prison'] "on account of his having relations and correspondence "with Don Anthony, with whom the king of England is very angry.

"When I reach land I shall inform you on more reliable sources about the above and "other news: you can assure the Shah that the Emperor has not made, nor will he make "peace with the Turks, and that His Holiness is busy getting together a fleet against them: "thus things are well disposed for the Christians to be at peace with one another and "united, so that I believe nothing will have been lost by this mission of ours, and that on "my arrival in Rome I shall write Your Reverences more consoling news still. I have "always in mind the state in which I left you, and shall immediately arrange for money "to be remitted by way of Hurmuz, sending in duplicate via Hurmuz the letters of our "lord the king, in which he will give orders to the Captain of Hurmuz. There is no safer "road for remitting it: by way of Aleppo it is impossible because of the whole country "being up in revolt. I am writing the enclosed to the king of Persia: you will close it and "present it to him.

"In this ship there embarked (John ?) Londinel [*? sic*] the Englishman, who was in the "Mogul's dominions and left behind his wife and one son and one daughter in Kashmir, "commended to the charge of Khwajeh Saba the Armenian: he is very ill and I doubt "whether he will pull through: he has made his will, in which he leaves me guardian of "his children. Should you by chance hear anything about his death, let the Superior (at "Isfahan) take charge of the two said children. On account of our having touched nowhere "we have only stinking water and biscuit—it is all for the love of God. Although separated "from you in the body, let our hearts be one, especially of those two who are remaining "in an infidel country. My dearest brethren, love one another. You will be so kind as "to remember me to the Augustinian Fathers. . . . I urge on you to be diligent in writing "and informing me minutely about everything—it will be very important to keep the diary "which our Father (General) enjoined on you to keep, and to send copies of it by various "routes, seeing that on all the roads there are many impediments" (to prevent it reaching Italy).

A few days after landing in Italy, Fr. Paul Simon was received in a lengthy audience by Pope Paul V, to whom he made a detailed report on the situation. (The new Praepositus General of the Congregation, Fr. Ferdinand of S. Mary, wrote, 18.10.1608,¹ to the two Fathers at Isfahan:

" . . . The Father" (i.e. Paul Simon) "has been very well received by His Holiness and "the Cardinals, and His Holiness is sending him to Spain: and in the meanwhile Fathers "Redempt and Benignus are going out to keep your Reverences company and to testify "to his Majesty there how Fr. Paul has arrived and well performed the commission entrusted "to him, and how His Holiness was pleased with his (the Shah's) messages and letters, as "they will tell you verbally in detail. . . . As regards the business about which the Viceroy "of Naples has written to your Reverences, do what he asks, as is my desire and that of "the Fathers" (here) . . .

Evidently impressed by the ability of the Carmelite Father, by the need of satisfying 'Abbas to some extent, and by the expediency of profiting by the favourable juncture owing to the general upheaval in the Ottoman dominions, the Sovereign Pontiff entrusted Fr. Paul Simon, as his envoy, with the mission of sounding the king of Spain and his ministers as to an alliance on the basis of that which had so successfully led to Lepanto in the time of S. Pius V. To

¹ O.C.D. 236 a.

that end Pope Paul V addressed, 16.10.1608, Briefs to king Philip III,¹ to the Duke of Lerma his chief minister, to the Cardinal of Toledo and to the General and Definitors of the Discalced Carmelites in Spain:

"To Our very dear son in Christ, Philip, Catholic king of the Spains, Pope Paul V. "Our beloved son, the pious priest Paul Simon, Discalced Carmelite, who will deliver this "letter of Ours to Your Majesty, has reported to Us by injunction of the King of the Persians, "to whom We had sent him with Our letters at the beginning of Our Pontificate, many "matters which seem of a truth to be of consequence to the general advantage of the "Christian commonwealth and very greatly so to Your own. On that account We wished "that he should go on to Your Majesty in Spain, so that You may be able to learn everything "from him more conveniently and clearly. Of the exceptional judgment, with which You "are gifted, You will without a doubt understand how greatly the friendship and goodwill "of that monarch is to the advantage not only of those poor sons of Ours living in the "dominions of the king of the Persians, but also to the interests of Your Majesty in those "parts; but Paul Simon himself, who lately returned from there, will still more fruitfully "demonstrate it to You. Certainly We promise Ourselves that You will pay attention so "that these good terms may be improved on both sides and, where there be need, matters "remedied in time. We pressing request Your Majesty to act in such manner as You will "gather at greater length from this same Paul Simon, in whom, We desire, You will place "entire confidence in these matters which he will relate to You about this business . . . "Given at Tusculum under the Fisherman's ring 17th Kalends November 1608 (= 16.10. "1608), in the fourth year of Our Pontificate."

Undoubtedly, therefore, Pope Paul V had not failed to give through Fr. Paul Simon due warning to the King of Spain of the evil and overbearing conduct of the Portuguese officials and others in Hurmuz towards Persia, of which 'Abbas I so bitterly complained, and by which they were heading for disaster to themselves and prejudicing Christian interests in general.

The Spanish branch of the Order was able to make easy for Fr. Paul Simon the approach to the Spanish Court, and he had considerable help from the Spanish Cardinal; but king Philip III and his ministers, while personally favourable, shelved the responsibility for a decision on to the shoulders of the Council of State for examination of the proposal to make common cause in support of the military operations of 'Abbas I. This body after much delay held a number of meetings and came to no definite conclusion: in the words of the Carmelite chronicler, Fr. Eusebius ab Omn. Sanct.²:

"Just as a body of inordinate dimensions and weight is difficult to move, so that vast "monarchy spread over both hemispheres moved with sluggish slowness in making decisions: "the objects proposed were debated and argued by the councillors of State, but they agreed "only in taking no decision."

While Fr. Paul Simon was still in Spain, Robert Sherley reached Rome via Muscovy, i.e. at the end of 1609, and, after preliminary discussions of his business, went on to Spain to present his credentials to king Philip III: without having succeeded in the objective of his mission to Madrid Fr. Paul Simon was thereupon recalled to Rome, where he had arrived back by February 1609 and where he was to remain for several years. Before leaving Italy for Madrid the Carmelite Father had written to a Cardinal in Curia a letter³ which bears as date only "Monday 1608"—doubtless in September or October:

"I think Your most reverend Lordship will⁴ recall that among the points which I "mentioned for His Holiness's consideration on my arrival from Persia was this, that the

¹ See Appendix of Latin Briefs for text: original in Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. iv, p. 81, No. 174.

² MSS. *Hist. Miss.* in O.C.D. 285, 286.

³ Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 20, p. 153, Arch. Sec. Vat.

⁴ It was not till later that the style 'Eminence' was adopted for cardinals.

"Patriarch of the Armenians together with some bishops and other seculars of theirs begged me to draw the attention of His Holiness to the fact that the consul for the Venetians in Aleppo did not allow them to proceed to Rome, and that the Portuguese in Hurmuz did them (the Armenians) much injury and hurt: that the Patriarch and the bishops commended themselves to His Holiness, and expressed their respect: that the Patriarch desired to come to Rome in order to kiss the feet of His Holiness, but was unable to do so, or even to write on account of the disturbances and of the irritation of the king with him, which was still fresh. His Holiness told me that your most reverend Lordship would write to the Superior of our Fathers in Persia, Fr. John (Thaddeus) of S. Elisaeus, to comfort them and encourage them to persevere in their obedience to His Holiness, to show them favour, etc. I beg you to send me by the bearer the Briefs for Persia, should you have received them, and that writing in Persian on which is the private seal of the king there, so that I may show it in Spain, seeing that it is to be the countersign on the letters which the Shah" (of Persia) "will write. . . ."

Here it is necessary to turn for a moment to the Carmelite Fathers left in Isfahan, and to note that the Grand Wazir, or else the Daruga duly fulfilled the Shah's orders in finding them a residence—a commodious building belonging to the royal domain, and sent them a "farman" granting them its tenancy. One room was adapted as a chapel, dedicated to the Names of Jesus and Mary in memory of the churches of the Congregation in Rome and Genoa: on the Feast of the Purification, 2.2.1608, Mass was celebrated there for the first time. Other important rites and ceremonies on that day concerned Robert Sherley, of whom the following description is given:¹

" . . . Don Robert is a man of medium height, fair and beardless, aged about 30 years: he wears in one ear a small ring, with a tiny diamond: he is a man of sagacity, but a booster, pretender and conceited. In Persia he has lived in public as a Catholic, has been to confession and to Communion once a year, attended the churches and performed all other pious acts of a good Christian. He purchased a slave from Circassia, a province situated between Muscovy and Persia, who belonged to the *Muhammadan* faith, kept her as his wife, and because it was made a point of religious scruple and duty he had her baptized by Fr. Paul Simon, the Discalced Carmelite, and married her—secretly, it is said—in order to celebrate the nuptials later in Italy in public and with pomp. He afterwards left this lady in a convent in Cracow together with another Christian slave of his, Armenian by nationality.

"In public the king ('Abbas I) used to pay him respect, but he has never made use of him in anything, and was keeping him as it were a hostage, while waiting for the return of Don Anthony his brother from the mission entrusted to him because he was so little pleased with the ill report made about him by the ambassador his companion,² and because of the suspicion that he had sold the presents sent for the Christian kings.

"Don Robert has stayed in Persia 10 years, with an allowance of 2,000 scudi³ made to

¹ Fondo Borghese, Ser. IV, 52, p. 346.

² i.e. Husain Quli Baig—the wording is not clear whether it was Anthony Sherley or Husain Quli Baig so suspected.

³ Fondo Borghese II, n. 20, p. 181, contains observations from an (unsigned) different source, presumably Augustinian or Spanish.

" . . . From Moscow Don Anthony did not remit any money for his brother who had remained behind in Persia, at which the king ('Abbas) marvelled greatly. . . . The king gave Don Robert, who remained with him as a hostage, 2,000 piastres p.a., and it is almost 10 years past that he has been at the Persian Court without having received a farthing from his home. Persuaded by the *Augustinian Fathers* he became a Catholic, made his confession and Communion: he *did the same* when the Discalced (Carmelite) Fathers arrived in Persia, and has since lived as a Catholic from what I have seen and heard, although he ate meat on Saturday, but I believe it was because of bodily debility, as he said to the Superior of the Discalced. In Persia he had gained the goodwill of the king and of the nobles, by whom he is liked because he renders service to all and sundry, and gives trouble to nobody: besides which he conformed to their habits and customs in things that were not contrary to (our) religion, even though far from edifying. For the rest he did not set much of a good example, because he got drunk . . . and favoured the heretics, who went

"him annually: and, in order to have it unencumbered, as the Persians have it, he had "himself enrolled as a 'slave' of the king: for these latter—the slaves—receive the payment "integrally of what is assigned them, while for those who do not have themselves inscribed "as 'slaves' ten per cent is deducted from their pay. Notwithstanding this employment, "Don Robert desired to get back to his home and caused a letter to be written from "England by his parents, who informed him that Don Anthony, his brother, was being "employed by the king of Spain with the post of general of a force: he (Robert) spread "this news about the Court, and showed it to the Shah and this letter was certified as "genuine by the Carmelite and Augustinian Fathers. He took advantage of the occasion "to say to the king that, in view of the high position to which his brother had risen, and "in view of the friendship which his Majesty had contracted with the Christian princes, "it was now the time to negotiate a league against the Sultan of Turkey and that, were "he given letters for the Christian princes, he (Robert Sherley) would assuredly get this "done. Impelled by this motive the Shah sent him as ambassador to all the Christian "Princes, and in particular to His Holiness, giving them an account of all his undertakings "against the Turks up to this day, and begging His Holiness to unite them against the "Turks. . . ."

As regards the Circassian lady, the story as taken by the author of *En Persia* (vol. III) from the MSS. *History of the Discalced Carmelites* differs considerably from that quoted above, which made her a bought slave, and is to the effect that Sampsonia, daughter of a Circassian chieftain named Sampsuiff Iscaon, and born about 1589, schismatic Greek or Georgian by religion, at the age of four was brought to the Persian Court by her paternal aunt, who had become a favourite wife of Shah 'Abbas, and grew up at Isfahan. By all accounts she was of handsome presence, a fine horsewoman, took pleasure in the feminine arts such as embroidery and painting. In his attendance at Court Robert Sherley had got to know and fall in love with her. The Shah's estrangement and Sherley's period of reclusion at Qazwin had separated them, until his sudden dispatch on this mission to Europe and readmission to the Shah's presence, if not his favour, brought matters to a head and determined him on immediate marriage and departure with his bride, a course which fortunately had the all-important approval of Sampsonia's aunt, and must have therefore had the connivance of 'Abbas himself.

In contradiction to the statement by the writer quoted above that Robert Sherley had "lived as a Catholic, been to confession and Communion once a year", the MSS. *Hist. Miss.* of Fr. Eusebius and other Carmelite authors (from original manuscripts no longer available or, at any rate, noticed by the present compiler) assert that as the result of intercourse with the Carmelites, i.e. between the dates of the meeting at Qazwin, 14th November, 1607, and the end of January 1608, he came to discuss matters of religion with them, and to abjure his errors, and be received into the Catholic Church by Fr. John Thaddeus, and that at the same time Sampsonia also became a convert after due preparation by the same Father: that, having been received into the Church, they were there married the same day, 2nd February, 1608, Feast of the Purification: that the same day the newly married couple set off for Europe.

"to Persia, such as an English clergyman who stayed for some months in his house, and John Meldinal (? sic Londinel) "also an English heretic, sent previously by the Queen to the king of the Moguls" (i.e. the Mogul Emperor at Delhi) "to obtain from him certain seaports in the East Indies, where the English and Dutch ships would be able to withdraw "with the booty they took from the Portuguese. He (Sherley) presented him to the king of Persia both on his going "out and on his return. There are indications that while Don Robert was in Persia he caused the esteem which the "king of Persia had for His Holiness and the king of Spain to diminish, and that of the king of England and the Dutch "to rise. Through the Augustinian Fathers the king of Spain wrote to the Shah of Persia to drive him out of his country "because he was his (the king of Spain's) enemy. He ('Abbas I) would not do so. Finally he" (the king of Spain) "ordered Luis Pereira de la Cerda, his ambassador, whom three years ago he sent to the Shah, to arrange to get him "out of Persia dead or alive, regardless of expense. Don Robert agreed to leave, because the ambassador of Spain "promised him 4,000 scudi a year, and other rewards, showing him the instructions of his king that he might do this— "although it did not take effect. Pope Clement also tried to get him away through the intermediary of the Emperor "and Mgr Ferero, Apostolic Nuncio at Prague, presented a memorial to the Emperor for this object. . . . At the time "when the Discalced (Carmelite) Fathers reached Persia the Shah no longer treated him as he had previously done. "His pay came in slowly. . . . I believe it is inexpedient for the service of God and Holy Church that this Englishman "should return to Persia."

According to this account the enemies of Robert Sherley, "in particular the Mullahs", had an attempt made on his life before they had gone far on the road: a band fell on the caravan, and, after binding the arms of the servants, tied Sherley to a tree and tried to make him drink poison: at that moment a sword fell from the hands of one miscreant and Sherley's wife, like a true Amazon, bounded on it and proceeded to thrust and cut and kill some of the band, putting to flight the rest.

What is certain is that in Fr. John Thaddeus' own handwriting there exists¹ a "Memoria—list of Christians baptized in Persia by the Carmelite Fathers", the first name in which is "Doña Theresa, wife of Count Don Robert Sherley, day of the Purification 1608": no mention here of Sherley himself receiving conditional baptism, nor of his being received into the Church: and this would seem to confirm the other account, that he had already been recognized as, and was practising as a Catholic before the arrival of the Carmelites in December 1607, as also that she had become, if not been born, a Muslim, for as an "orthodox" schismatic there would have been no need of baptism. Sampsonia did in fact take the name of the Holy Reformer of the Carmelite Order. According to MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, the certificate of their marriage was recorded in the register later, on 27.9.1615.

The narrative, of unidentified authorship, in the Fondo Borghese cited above, proceeds as regards Sherley's journey across Europe:

"He went to Moscow and presented to the (Grand) Duke, to the Palatine father of the (Grand) Duchess, to the captain-general of the (Grand) Duke, tents and carpets and other articles from Persia. In exchange he had from the (Grand) Duke a fur cloak and a horse, from the Palatine a carriage for six horses: and with the latter he discussed a project for giving his (the Palatine's) daughter in marriage to the son of the Shah of Persia. From the captain-general he had a cap of sable-skin, and coat of Turkish brocade as worn in Poland. Together with 'Ali Quli Baig, at present in Rome as ambassador of the Shah, he had audience, as they had met in that country. They received a reply expressing friendship. They went on together to the king of Poland, where they had audience separately (were given a magnificent entertainment, 3 April, ? 1609) and received replies couched in general terms. The Englishman made a gift to the king of Poland of a piece of fine white cloth from India. He received from the king a gift of an ewer and basin of silver gilt. Together also they went to the Emperor. They had a joint audience and received a reply in general terms. The Englishman had some goods consigned to his charge by the king of Persia: from the Emperor he received as a gift a box with silver candlesticks valued at about 300 scudi, and *he was made a Count Palatine of the Empire*. The Persian received as a gift a vase of mother of pearl, an ewer and basin, and other silver articles worth 400 scudi." (Sherley was sent on with a passport on 1.7.1609: on the 20th July Robert paid off a great sum, a debt contracted by his brother Anthony, i.e. in 1600.)²

There is a discrepancy as to dates regarding the arrival and stay of Robert Sherley in Rome: in his *Hist. Miss.* Fr. Eusebius ab. Omn. Sanct., chap. XV, part I, book 2, under the year 1609, not only gives those dates in July regarding Sherley's stay at the Emperor's Court, but adds that in August Pope Paul V, to oblige the Shah, left no stone unturned to show regard for his ambassador, creating Robert Sherley a Count of the Apostolic Palace of the Lateran, knight of the "Aurata Milizia", chamberlain of honour (Brief signed 7th October). Writing more than two centuries later the author of *En Persia*, vol. III, p. 28, makes Sherley to have reached Rome about November 1608, to have then presented to the Pope the letters from Shah 'Abbas, and discussed questions at issue between the princes of Christendom and the Persian monarch, subsequently leaving for Savoy, France, Flanders and Spain, where he remained 14 months³ and the Court supplied him, his wife and attendants with all needs

¹ O.C.D. 235.

² Fr. Eusebius ab Omn. Sanct., chap. XV, part I, book 2.

³ Quoting the *Comentarios* of Don Garcia Silva y Figueroa, II, p. 107.

and expenses so that on this and articles bestowed on him 30,000 ducats were spent;¹ he adds that Teresa Sherley became on intimate terms with the Carmelite nuns at Madrid, in particular with Mother Beatrix de Jesus, niece of S. Teresa herself, from whom Sherley's wife received a small relic of the flesh of the saint, which years after was to fortify her at a critical juncture in her life. Later, so the account in *En Persia* proceeds, furnished by king Philip III with a good sum of money for the road, the Sherleys travelled from Madrid to Holland, where dealings in Persian silk were proposed to the Dutch States-General, and to England, where Robert Sherley is said to have made like proposals to Henry, Prince of Wales, and to a group of merchants who in due course fitted out some three ships, by one of which the Sherleys sailed to India (an early move of the first East Indian Company, no doubt). Travelling in that age would have made it impracticable for Robert Sherley, arrived first in Rome in October or even August 1608, to have spent fourteen months at Madrid and yet been back in Rome at the beginning of October 1609: for that reason, among others, the year 1609 for his arrival in Rome from Poland, etc., given by Fr. Eusebius, appears more likely to be correct than the 1608 of *En Persia*. As that of the first arrival of Robert Sherley in Rome, the year 1609 is, indeed, not in doubt when the two Latin Briefs (see the appendix to this work) from Pope Paul V to 'Abbas I, dated 9.9.1609 and 9.10.1609 (Arm. XLV, vol.5, pages 39 and 57) are consulted: almost simultaneously with Robert Sherley, but travelling separately, the Shah had sent a Persian joint envoy, 'Ali Quli Baig: in Astrakhan or Muscovy he fell in with the priest Francisco Costa (whom the Carmelites had met on the voyage down the Volga in 1607), and together they reached Rome. In the earlier of the two Briefs the Pope relates how

"with great gladness We welcomed the respected and well-born 'Ali Quli Baig, envoy from
"Your Highness, whom You had sent to Us with the priest Francisco Costa, and We
"received from him the letters full of Your urbanity and regard towards Us . . ."

After touching briefly on their mutual activities against the common foe, the Turk, the Pope continued:

"all of which You will learn in greater detail from Your envoy, to whom We have stated
"fully Our will, and he will also notify You how agreeable his arrival is to Us, and how
"willingly We have seen him each time he has come into Our presence. To be sure, just
"as at his public entry into this Our dear City, We gave instructions that he should be
"received with all the honours, so We have ordered that during the whole of this time
"that he remains here he should be treated with every sign of regard and honour, both
"because this was particularly fitting the eminent opinion of You that We have and the
"goodwill, with which We especially attend it, and because this same envoy of Yours
"showed himself in every manner worthy of being honoured and used with politeness, on
"which account We commend him highly to Your Highness. We pray God that He
"enlighten You, most puissant and doughty king, with the light of His Holy Spirit, that
"You may see those things which lead to His glory and to Your true felicity, and Your
"heart be the more fired with love for the Redeemer of the human race, our most merciful
"Lord Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son, who from all eternity with the Father and the
"Holy Spirit is one God . . ."

¹ See Fr. Eusebius MSS. *Hist. Miss.*

"In Spain Sherley was attacked by the calumnies of a single person, who spread the rumour that he was only a
"feigned ambassador of the Shah, and had obtained the favour for his own private ends. Doubt was cast about his
"religion, and he was refused audience by king Philip, so he had to go to England and humble himself to king James."

It is evident that this reference is to the Persian dispatched by the Shah in 1609, accompanied by Fr. Antonio da Govea, to sell a consignment of silk in Madrid—to the person whose name all the missionaries spelt "Danguis Bek", which one hazards to be Tangiz or Jangiz Baig, who on his arrival there sometime in 1610, finding Sherley in Madrid with the style of "ambassador", proceeded in typical Persian fashion to intrigue against the Englishman and spread it abroad that the latter was not a genuine envoy. By his misplaced generosity with the Shah's property, as will be related in due course, this Jangiz Baig was credited, and Sherley discredited had to leave Spain in some ignominy. See Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus in *En Persia*, vol. III, p. 92, quoting the prologue to the *Comentarios* of García y Figueroa.

Just a month later, 9.10.1609 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 5, p. 57) the Pope wrote again to Shah 'Abbas I (as will be read in full further on), and mentioned that:

"Your Highness's envoy, the respected and well-born 'Ali Quli Baig, had departed a few days previously,¹ when Our dear son, the gentle-born Robert Sherley the Englishman, Your other envoy, reached Us."

So that Sherley's arrival in Rome must have taken place in the latter part of September 1609. Dated 24.3.1609 (Arm. XLV, vol. 4, p. 159) some six months before that arrival of the younger brother in Rome, there happened to have been issued a Brief in answer to a letter the Pope had received from the elder brother, Sir Anthony Sherley, who evidently from Spain, or wherever he then was, had written to Robert about the latter's mission from Persia:

"We derived great comfort in the Lord from your letter, for We learnt in it what great mercy God had done to you not only in leading you out of the darkness of eternal death to the light of the life in Heaven, but also in converting that energy, with which previously you persecuted Holy Church, into zeal for the propagation of the Catholic religion. With gladness therefore We read what you have written to Us about your pious wish, and also what you have written at length to (your) brother about the conduct of the mission to Us and to Our most dear sons, the Emperor-elect and king of Spain, which the King of the Persians has entrusted to him. You have admonished him prudently indeed, and conscientiously. We, indeed, in everything which We can in the Lord, shall show favour to your brother and Our officials and those of this Holy See will attentively assist him in those matters which shall appertain to the glory of God and increase of the Christian Faith, and when he shall reach the City We shall receive him with the gladdest of hearts. But We exhort you, dear son, in gratitude and mind of the benefit you have received from God to strive daily more to win for yourself the Divine grace. . . . Our fatherly love indeed you have bound to yourself by the zeal, care and attention with which you strive to mend the ill-use made of your past life . . ."

According to the document in the Vatican Archives², Robert Sherley on 4.10.1609 dated the 'note verbale' or memorial which he laid before Pope Paul V, a document of all the greater interest because of the marginal notes, which are thought to be in the handwriting of the great Borghese Pope himself:

"HOLY FATHER,

"The 'Grand Sufi', king of Persia, my master, in the letter, which he has written to Your Holiness begs You to give credit to what I shall say to You in his name, and has ordered me to put in writing these paragraphs and heads, in order that the reply may be given point by point.

"1. The king of Persia has sent me to assure you of the regard and great affection he has for Your Holiness: and he has expressly bidden me to try to learn most precisely what Your Holiness desires of the king, my lord, who affirms himself to be devoted to You and ready in every matter that Your Holiness may command.

"2. He returns infinite thanks to Your Holiness for the fine offer and promise You have made to him through the intermediary of the Carmelite Fathers, to form a union of the Christian Princes at sea against the common enemy; and the king, my master, begs You to have it executed forthwith, in order that the Turk may not have the time to resist so unforeseen and irreparable an injury.

"3. And because the king of Persia is well informed that no sovereign can injure the

¹ Briefs dated 11.9.1609 (Arm. XLV, vol. 15 c) to the Bishop of Brescia, Duke of Bavaria, Archduke Maximilian warmly recommended 'Ali Quli Baig returning to Persia.

² Fondo Borghese, Ser. IV, 52, p. 338.

"Turks more than his Catholic Majesty" (Spain) "—by reason of the ease (with which he can reach), and proximity to, the scene of action, because of the huge size and might of his country, because of the invincible valour of his generals, feared not only by many nations in Europe, but feared by the Turk himself and held in very great respect—he begs Your Highness to make use of Your authority and best persuasion to suggest to and inspire that king" (i.e. of Spain) "to undertake an expedition to Cyprus, an island abounding with provisions of all kinds, with ports most suitable for wintering his fleet, and near at hand for an attack later on Syria and the city of Aleppo, and so join up with the Persian army advancing to the notable loss and confusion of the Turks.

[Marginal comment: "About this too there will first be mention, and to the point, in the 'Brief.'"]

"4. And, since the Turkish dominions extend alongside those of various sovereigns in Europe, the most serene king of Persia begs Your Holiness to counsel and persuade every sovereign to make war across from their frontiers, i.e. the king of Poland by way of Wallachia, and his Majesty the Emperor by way of Buda.

[Marginal comment: "This will also be done."]

"5. And, because there is no thing so prejudicial in a great confederacy as private agreements, he begs Your Holiness to use all persuasion to the end that every private friendly compact with the Sultan of Turkey be rescinded, and to counsel the other countries now estranged from each other to become reconciled and abandon their private quarrels, and employ their forces against the common enemy.

[Marginal comment: "King of France and king of England."]

"6. And, because no state is naturally complete and self-supporting, but they derive assistance from foreign aid, like the Turkish Sultan, who makes use of the amity of certain princes of Christendom and by their means is furnished with all sorts of munitions by land, and particularly by sea, . . . and all kinds of supplies for his galleys, and is enriched by the money of Christian traders—money which is the sinew of war: and also by their intermediary he gets news of what is happening in all countries, kingdoms and confederacies, the king of Persia most warmly begs Your Holiness to procure the general dissolution of all that traffic.

[Marginal comment: "There should be a discussion about this with the king of France and with Venice."]

"7. And, since in every great undertaking, and particularly in matters of warfare, it is most expedient that all the confederate members should be always kept informed of the progress made on one side and the other, the king of Persia urges that Your Holiness send an ambassador plenipotentiary, who will also be the leader and head of all the Christians there are in his dominions, and his Majesty will give him full powers so that he" (such ambassador) "may control them according to reason; while the king of Persia will send another who will have his residence at this" (Your Holiness') "Court, and thus every movement can always be made after consultation and counsel for the better execution of all common actions.

[Marginal comment: "Consideration will be given to the matter, and in due course I shall inform" (him).]

"8. The king of Persia invites Your Holiness to post an archbishop and establish him at the 'Three Churches'" (i.e. Echmiadzin) "in Greater Armenia, the place of residence of the patriarch of that race, through whom Your Holiness would easily be able to convince the latter and make him submit to the obedience of the Holy Roman Church, seeing that by virtue of Your (influence) they (the Armenians) would become exempt from many burdens and impositions which they now have to endure by reason of the war; for then they would be freed by the help of Your Holiness—I mean, when there be dispatched from here" (Rome) "the bishop whom the king would plant down there.

[Marginal comment: "Thought will be given to this, too."]

"9. The king of Persia begs Your Holiness to have particular care in the choice of

"Religious sent to his country—that they be circumspect and patient, and lead such good lives that they may give cause to his vassals to praise their good examples.

[Marginal comment: "It will be arranged for persons to be sent who will succeed in giving satisfaction."]

"10. And, because the king of Persia has always dealt with Your Holiness with all manner of confidence and, aware of Your supreme authority over all Christendom, has chosen You as his protector and procurator with the other princes to persuade and counsel them to take on them this glorious emprise, in order that the common enemy be totally routed and extirpated—should the potentates of Christendom fail to effect this, the king of Persia trusts that he will not be abandoned, but that Your Holiness with all Your might will personally embrace the emprise, as his Majesty intends to try by every means to attack the enemy in order to facilitate whatever expedition Your Holiness may undertake, and with raids, slaying and destroying, to tear the tyrant Turkish Sultan from his throne. . . . And this being the will of the king of Persia, my master, in accordance with his bidding I have signed these presents and sealed them in Rome, the 4th October, 1609.

"By me, COUNT ROBERT SHERLEY

"(Seal in Persian script: ROBERT SHERLEY)"

A postscript ran:

"The king of Persia asks Your Holiness that, in case Count Anthony Sherley my brother be free, you will order him to return to his Majesty, and, if by chance he be in the service of another prince, to write to that sovereign so that he (Anthony Sherley) may be allowed to resign, as the king my master promises to employ him only in such business as shall be to the honour and utility of Christendom."

[Marginal comment: "About this matter, on this point when he is in Spain the Nuncio will give him any good offices he may seek."]

At the foot came this further note, evidently by Paul Pope V himself:

"He asks for a Brief to be written to the king of Spain, *where he wishes to go*. He says that he will not go to England, should the king of Spain not be pleased for him to do so, or We. He has been also told that, when he is in Spain, he should discuss this with the king: and *We* shall have *Our* opinion expressed to him by *Our* Nuncio."

He had not then, October 1609,¹ been to Spain, it will be observed from the words: "he wishes to go".

Although in the main a repetition of all other messages brought by envoys from Persia, from Anthony Sherley onwards, and of the contents of letters to the Popes, these proposals put forth by Robert Sherley as his instructions from 'Abbas I contained one new and definite request or desire—that the king of Spain should send a fleet and retake Cyprus from the Turks, in order that it might be used as a base for an expedition of the Christian sovereigns, to land in Syria and march on Aleppo: and who can doubt but that at that stage of disorganization in the Ottoman dominions the proposal was sound, and might well have resulted in limiting the extent of the Sultan's rule to an incalculable extent. Once more, however, lack of clarity of vision, the absence of any spirit of sacrifice in the common cause on the part of Spain was to allow the opportunity to pass!

¹ As further arguments in support of 1609 being the year of Sherley's first arrival in Rome as ambassador, not 1608, there may be cited another manuscript, indicated to the present compiler (without his having the opportunity to consult it) by Mgr, now Cardinal, Tisserant, on 17.4.1935, viz. Vat. Lat., 867, ff. 414-6, in the Vatican Library:

"Instructions to and Negotiations of Robert Sherley with His Holiness in the name of the Persian" (i.e. 'Abbas I) in the year 1609 in order to discuss the league of the princes against the Turks, and the sending of missionaries to Persia."

also Pope Paul's acknowledgment to Shah 'Abbas of R. Sherley's mission is dated 1610.

The request for the appointment of a Latin bishop to Echmiadzin is surprising in the light of the fact that only a few months before Sherley left Persia the Shah was so suspicious of the Carmelite missionaries having designs on the Armenians and of their bringing up in discussion submission of the Armenian church to the Roman obedience, that for long he would not receive them in audience, and Sherley himself had warned them not to mention the Armenians. The latter part of the eighth clause increases suspicion—that Sherley was not the *porte-voix* of his master in this matter: it does not ring true.

However, Pope Paul V immediately acknowledged the making of that offer, as can be read from his Brief to Shah 'Abbas I (Arch. Secr. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 5, p. 57, formerly 49), beginning:

“POPE PAUL V

“To the illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas, King of the Persians.

“Illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas King of the Persians, greetings and the light of divine grace. There had departed a few days previously the honoured and high-born 'Ali Quli Baig, ambassador of Your Highness, when Our dear son the noble Robert Sherley the Englishman, Your other ambassador, reached Us; and assuredly his arrival was the more welcome to Us as We had the more longed to see him that We might more conveniently learn from himself what it was You had intimated to Us by Your letters long ago dispatched that You would give him for the common service. When he had entered this lovely city of Ours with a great throng of people and to the immense joy of all and on the second day had been escorted to Us, in order to honour him even as We had also done to Your former ambassador We received him kindly in the presence of some of Our venerable brethren the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church. He delivered to Us Your most welcome letter and in a clear speech in elegant style set forth the reason of his embassy. Returning afterwards, in a private conversation with all witnesses sent away, he made plain to Us with more care and detail Your kindness and zealous goodwill towards Us; he laid bare plans for waging war against Our mutual enemy the tyrant of the Ottomans; he pointed out what You think We must do; he stirred Us up to send a Nuncio of Ours to Your Highness, laying before Us the seriousness of the matter and Your kind feelings towards Our people. So to all this We reply (as that same ambassador of Yours will write back to You) in such a way that You can easily understand that Our longing especially harmonizes with the will of Your conscience just as Our affection for You does with Your kindly feelings towards Us. Consequently We shall again perform the duties of Our pastoral care among Our sons the most dear Catholic Kings and princes of the Christian commonwealth, and shall take pains to urge them with minds and arms united to shoulder a war as much glorious as necessary against our unconscionable enemies, the Turks, even as We have hitherto perpetually done; but particularly indeed We shall, as You desire, urge hereto Our most dear son in Christ, Philip the most puissant Catholic King and those princes who from their convenient situation can more readily assail the Ottoman despotism. In fine we shall leave naught undone that the enemy in Your district suffer greater loss and annoyance. Regarding moreover those things which Your same ambassador promised Us in Your name in order to promote the rank to be enjoyed by and the honours to be paid to the Nuncio We are to send to you, and regarding the setting up of a Catholic archbishop in Greater Armenia, We give your Highness very great thanks, and we shall deliberate about both topics and shall decide only on one worthy of so great an office and one who can satisfy You and his post, even as We shall also take pains that of such kind too shall be the rest of the Religious whom We shall send into Persia. For We desire nothing more than by patterns of Christian devoutness longsuffering steadfastness and of love the perfection of all virtues always to kindle Your Highness and the people subject to You more strongly with the love of Jesus Christ the only-begotten Son of God Our Saviour, that the joy which We are given on earth be as a result of Your friendship and kindness increased, nay rather

"be perfected in heaven where genuine love and true charity is found: an end which assuredly We seek of God ceaselessly by Our prayers. Now We pray that to the glory of His most holy Name and the spread of the Christian faith He guide You into the way of salvation and make You powerful over Our mutual enemies and crush scatter and rout them in the might of Your arm. Our affection for You, most powerful King, is from the heart, and all Your interests shall aye be dear to Us.

"Given at Tusculum under the Fisherman's Ring, 9th October 1609, in the 5th year of "Our Pontificate."

There is also in the Vatican (Fondo Chigi, II, 48, p. 327) a document which is largely a repetition of that just translated, but which is given here for the sake of completeness—it does make one allegation which, if true or partly true, is of historical value, viz. 'Abbas I was induced to seek war with the Turks in order to occupy the Tatars, freshly conquered, but rebellious from inaction. Elsewhere attention has been drawn to two other versions of the following document remarkably similar (the one practically identical with it), but headed—that in Fondo Borghese, Ser. IV, n., 52, p. 334: "Instructions to Don Anthony Sherley, ambassador to Pope Clement VIII," and that in Miscell. Arm. II, 151: "Report by Count Sherley to Pope Gregory XV in the month of August 1622 about the league against the Turks"; it is the language used with regard to that league proposed by 'Abbas I which in fact is conclusive for making the document belong to Robert Sherley's first mission of 1609:

"Memorial given to His Holiness Pope Paul V by Don Robert Sherley, ambassador of "the king of Persia.

"Holy Father, the business, which the king of Persia desires to be taken up by Your Holiness, can be summed up altogether under two headings, the one regarding affairs of State, that is a confederation of Christian princes against the Turk, the common enemy, the other regarding Religion: and, although this latter is the more important business, a greater object of consideration for Your Holiness and, too, more desired by me as a Catholic Christian, still, because with the king of Persia the other, that of affairs of State, has perhaps been the stronger motive in inducing him to do this, with Your Holiness' permission I shall begin with that.

"Your Holiness already knows of the great and ancient enmities between the two most puissant empires of Persia and Turkey, and of what import it would be to Christendom that that of the Turk should be brought low as being the nearer, stronger and more harmful.

"Discoursing, therefore, in years past Anthony Sherley, my brother, and I and other Catholic Christians with the king of Persia about this and finding him a valiant prince and desirous of humbling the Turk and moreover well disposed towards the Christian race, we began to encourage him in this design, pointing out to him . . . that that suited him by reason of his country being in that pass in which it then was, when the Tatars had recently been subjugated, and there was a danger of their breaking out into rebellion through idleness, if they were not kept occupied; and when proposing to him various plans, by which he could best arrive at this objective, we demonstrated to him of what great importance would be to him friendship and alliance with the Christian princes, their large forces, their constancy in whatever they had determined and their knowledge of the art of war and valour, because, if by way of Hungary and by acting on the defensive one single monarch like the Emperor was inflicting so much damage on the Turk, it was not to be doubted that all united together, or at least the principal ones together with the Persian forces would do much more.

"When the king then asked us how this union might be effected he was answered by us that no intermediary would be so powerful as that of seeking the favour of such an understanding with the Roman Pontiff, vicar of Christ, who is the universal head of all the princes, and that, in order to gain that, no way would be so easy as that of favouring

"Christians and granting them those privileges which will be mentioned under the other 'heading, 'Religion'. The Shah, persuaded, then sent off as his ambassadors to make this request of the late Clement VIII the said Anthony Sherley, my brother, together with 'Husain 'Ali Baig, a leading Persian, and later on he dispatched 'Ali Quli Baig, Muhrdar, also a Persian (who left the other day to return to Persia) to Your Holiness, and afterwards me, Robert Sherley, also, each of us separately so that such disputes as to precedence as occurred between my said brother and Husain 'Ali Baig should not of necessity arise. The king is now making a fresh appeal and praying Your Holiness in regard to the two headings mentioned, with respect to the first, that of the Confederation, his desire consisting of these three points:

"(1) That there should be friendship and correspondence between the Christian nations and the Persian, so that in all matters business may be transacted with greater intimacy than hitherto.

"(2) That Your Holiness and the other princes should have nuncios and ambassadors and agents at that capital" (i.e. Isfahan) "as also the king of Persia his at this Your capital and those of the other princes, who join the confederacy, in order that there may be greater trustfulness and reciprocal regard on one side and the other. The king of Persia is desirous also that the Christian princes should send him men, who are skilled in the management of artillery, as also persons expert in other necessary crafts, which would be specified by his ambassadors.

"(3) That this be a reciprocal confederacy between these princes and the Shah, both offensive in the matter of warfare against the Turks, and defensive when in making peace or a truce the Shah is to be included also, while he on the other part will do the same in like cases, and will observe it faithfully.

"And, in order that this confederacy may cause its effect to emerge to the hurt of the common enemy he ('Abbas I) desires that all the pacts concluded up till now by any Christian prince whatsoever with the Turk be broken, because any plan is capable of being spoilt by such (pacts) for the reasons which will be explained to Your Holiness.

"As to warfare a defensive war solely does not please the Shah, but he would prefer that the Christian princes took the offensive for many reasons, and in particular because a war of defence is risky to the defenders apart from the waste of time, men, expenditure, and reputation, while the enemy's discipline improves. On the contrary an offensive, besides avoiding these and many other inconveniences, just as it brings with it advantages and fame, so it also inspires fear and brings peril to the adversary, because it penetrates the more his defects and discovers his weak points, which were being kept masked by remaining on the defensive. It may be added that the weaknesses of the Turkish Empire are also disclosed to be considerably greater than what was thought: and now it is seen that, although there is no longer a war in Hungary, the Turk is posting there all the flower of his armies as a parade" (of force) "and out of fear of the rebels he has in Anatolia and elsewhere, while the troops are more showy than efficient for the most part. The interior of his realms is without soldiers, fortresses, munitions, or any other practical means of defence, as will be gathered, when particular places are discussed. Besides this the government is corrupt, disorganized and tyrannical: places as judges and governorships are sold, and to incapable and unmanageable men, so that the people, burdened and oppressed, everywhere are discontented. Very large numbers are daily fleeing to the king of Persia, and frequently news is heard of fresh rebellions, and very serious ones, as was that in Shirwan, which routed the Ottoman general with 60,000 men, that of the leader of the Arabs and of the Agha of Janissaries, and so many others known to Your Holiness, which for the sake of brevity I omit to specify, all of which have occurred since the king of Persia recommenced war against the Turk. By these revolts and other greater disturbances they become weakened further, and are the more certain to be beaten in battle.

"As to the time and seat" (to be chosen) "the king of Persia cannot propose anything definite, as he does not know what would be convenient to, or the plans of, the Christian princes. He puts forward none the less for consideration his opinion, that is to say, that he would desire that war should be waged in a part where the armies of the princes and his own would not be operating at too great a distance for their greater fame and because they would not be able to consult together about their plans, and in case of need give each other suitable aid. For this reason it would seem to him (the Shah) very convenient that it should be in Syria or Palestine for the successful outcome of the undertaking also, since those regions have few fortresses and are poorly provided with forces. Should this not be possible, or not be judged expedient, the king of Persia will not fail to create a very powerful diversion elsewhere, if the Christian princes should keep the Turk harassed in Hungary, or at sea with a fleet, so that he would have to divide his forces.

"As regards the second heading, 'the Christian Religion,' the king of Persia has easily been induced, by the mercy of God and for the greater pleasure of Your Holiness, to offer what had been sought in past times by so many Christian potentates, being moved thereto by the abovementioned interests and the advantage of his country from the desire he has of this confederacy, and also being courteous and mild by nature, very amiable to Christians, whom he is inclined to favour, particularly since he took to wife a Christian, daughter of Simon Khan, one of the Georgian kings. This is also a reason why many of the chief men at his court are Christians, as in particular the general of his army and many others. To this inclination and propensity of favouring Christians is to be added the fact that the Muhammadan creed of the Persians according to the interpretation given it by 'Ali thinks well of Christians out of charity, whereas the Turkish creed according to the interpretation of 'Uthman looks on them quite to the contrary. Prompted therefore by the abovementioned grounds the king of Persia offers to do and permit in favour of Christians all that for the more complete satisfaction of Your Holiness: and as a token of the sincerity of his mind and his genuine determination he has been pleased to set down this in a separate document which, as will be seen, contains this in substance, i.e.:

"(a) That he will cause to submit to the obedience of Your Holiness and the Holy Apostolic See all schismatic Christians in his realms whether Georgians, Armenians or of whatever other kind they may be; (b) that he will admit into his realms preachers and 'founders' of the Christian religion, and will grant the free practice of the same Religion with very wide privileges.

"As to the manner of introducing it smoothly at the beginning, it will be rendered easy by Your Holiness granting them the nuncio, for whom the Shah presses, because under cover of his staff and for the service of his people he can bring with him preachers and Religious, as many as he may wish, who will acquire greater freedom and will be able without impediment to go about spreading the Holy Faith in the hope that within a short time the results desired by all good Catholics will be seen to the glory of God and the exaltation of Holy Church. . . ."

An Italian version of Robert Sherley's credentials is extant.¹ After the usual grandiloquent prelude, and apostrophizing of the Sovereign Pontiff, it runs:

"... I have determined to inform You that recently there have arrived the Reverend Fathers² sent in Your name to me in token of the alliance and friendship there is between Us. They have set forth to Me all the business which You had bidden them communicate to Me. Wherefore, having learnt all those matters which they have represented to me in the name of Your Holiness, I had resolved to send one of Our most trusty servants to all the Christian Princes; but, since there was with me an illustrious personage, Don Robert Sherley, an English gentleman, who has been long in Our service, for that reason

¹ Fondo Borghese, Ser. IV, n. 52.

² i.e. the Discalced Carmelites.

"I have decided to dispatch that gentleman, both because he is from the same country "(? *sic*, 'paese') as Your Holiness, but also because he is very well informed about all our "affairs as having seen everything with his own eyes. From him Your Holiness will be "able to understand all My position, so far as concerns war and peace. The Fathers "mentioned above" (i.e. the Carmelites) "have told me that Your Holiness desires to know "in what direction it would be well to attack the Turk, our common enemy, in those "regions. With regard to this I cannot tell You anything more except that on My side "I have in the past exerted all my might and shall not fail to do so in the future: still, in "fact, I have ready a large army. On Your side You can now judge better where it would "be well to begin warfare, seeing that Your Holiness is more acquainted with the country. "Anyhow, to give My opinion, I should consider it would be good to march on Aleppo "with one army and dispatch another wheresoever Your Holiness may think best. On "Our part I am going to proceed with two forces, with the one I shall harass the region "round Diarbakr, with the other the Anatolian area. With the aid of the Creator of all "I trust that the Turks, thrown into confusion and harassed on all sides, will be finished "and exterminated. With their removal from our midst there will then be greater neigh- "bourliness between us, and then as neighbours we shall be able to display the amity "and alliance there is between us. Because the English gentleman named, during the time "he has been here in my service, has always conducted himself well and has lived as it "behoved according to his creed, for that reason I have acquired confidence in him, and "all that he will represent regarding Our concord and friendship You should hold as "absolutely true, because he is Our trusted" (man). "I shall not commend to You this "Englishman because I know that Your Holiness will not fail to cherish him and hold him "recommended to You, as is fitting, so that this amity and friendship between us be "maintained, which is effected by the frequent coming and going of persons and communi- "cations between one and the other. You will do me a favour by informing Me of any "matter in which I can be of service to Your Holiness, or to any other of the Christian "Princes whatsoever, for I shall not fail to do You the service, as befits our sentiments and "friendship. In order not to make this more diffuse and tedious I pray God—may He be "blessed—that Your end be most happy and fortunate. . . ."

The Latin text of Pope Paul's reply to the above missive, after Sherley's return from Spain, is available:¹ and it is evident from it that Sherley returned to Rome at the end of his stay in Spain.

"POPE PAUL THE FIFTH.

"To the illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas,² king of the Persians.

"O! illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas, king of the Persians, greeting and the "light of the Divine grace. Our dear son, the English gentleman Robert Sherley, the "mouthpiece of Your Highness, has done in Spain all those things which You had given "him to do by your instructions, and now is preparing himself for the journey, so that as "soon as possible he may return to Persia and Your Highness. But in that You had in- "structed him to betake himself to the king of England; this he had been unable to do "without risk to his soul, for that king is separated from communion with the Holy Catholic "Church. He has asked Us to be pleased to make excuses for him to Your Highness, if "for the sake of religion he refrained from proceeding on that mission. But since he has "so just, so manifest an excuse, to wit that of the salvation of his soul, We ask once and "again of You to accept it for Our sake, for it will certainly be most agreeable to Us, who "in the meantime will pray God that He will enlighten You with the light of His holy "grace, so that You come to know the path of salvation, and along it arrive 'at perfect "and incorruptible felicity.

¹ Arm. XLV, 6, *Epistolae ad Principes*, Pauli V, LXXVIII, p. 33, Arch. Sec. Vat.

² Spelt "Abbas" in the original Latin.

"Given at S. Mark's, Rome, under the Fisherman's seal, the 9th Kalends of August 1610, "and the sixth year of Our Pontificate." (24.7.1610.)

Notwithstanding the evident wish of the Sovereign Pontiff, as expressed in that Brief, it would appear that Robert Sherley did proceed to England, for Sir W. Foster's *English Factory Records* (of the East India Company) contain the statement:

"On 1.10.1611 Mr. R. Sherley presented to king James I his credentials as an ambassador "from the king of Persia, on whose account he offered to the English the free and absolute "use of two ports in his dominions."

As already noted, by one of the English ships fitted out for a voyage to Surat Robert and Teresa Sherley and their servants sailed back to the East; and here—since this narrative only incidentally comes across Sherley in connection with the Carmelites and with Papal negotiations over the Turkish menace—it is convenient for a time to leave following their tracks, as they reconnoitred by sea along the coast of Makran, and returned to Sind and Tatta, and thence went inland to the Court of the Great Mogul.

* * * * *

* * * *

Before the situation, incidents and difficulties confronting the Carmelites at Isfahan during the years 1608 to 1611 are set out in proper sequence, the observations of Fr. Paul Simon, the first Superior, during his six months' stay and travel in the country on the customs of the people, the personality of 'Abbas I, and the means at his disposal may first be recorded.

As to the country and its capital at this period the reader desirous of detail may turn to the books of the lay Spanish ambassador of 1618-9, Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa, who in his *Comentarios* of his 'Embajada que de parte del Rey de España don Felipe III hizo al Rey Xa Abas de Persia', published by the 'Sociedad de Bibliófilos Españoles', in vol. II, pp. 18-36, has left a pleasing and lengthy description of the city of Isfahan itself, with its gardens, extensive roofed bazar, Great Square "more than 600 paces in length by 300 in breadth," at the head of one of the shorter sides of which was then in 1618 rising, not yet finished, the Masjid-i-Shah, famous already in those days for its tiles and marble slabs of various colours, which the masons were still cutting and polishing, with, too, on the longer side of the square, to the left coming from the mosque, the palace, and its reception hall surmounted by a five-storied tower-like erection, with verandas and painted and gilded rooms, from the topmost of which all the town and gardens were visible: he may consult, too, the detailed description of certain Persian provinces and cities, the result of the observations of the Spanish Carmelite, Fr. Philip of the Most Holy Trinity in his *Voyages d'Orient*, published in French, Latin and Italian, whose sojourn and journeys date to 1629, 1630, 1640.

In his report,¹ written after his return to Rome in 1608, Fr. Paul Simon stated, then:

" . . . The country which I saw is sparsely inhabited, for the most part all flat, with "little water and much uncultivated land; while that which is cultivated has a great "abundance of all sorts of produce, such as we have in Italy, and cheap. For less than "a real seven pounds of white bread could be had in Isfahan, and at the time there was "a scarcity. . . . There is an abundance of wine, rice, grapes, melons and other fruit—"all the year round fresh can be seen—of meat and oxen sufficiently so. The Persians "do not eat the flesh of cows and calves, but mutton to a vast extent and horseflesh, which "is the most esteemed and by the nobles. The climate is very temperate: last winter there "was little cold. In Isfahan, where I was, no snow fell, except for a little at the end of

¹ O.C.D. 234 b.

"February. The heat of summer is not great: and on account of the clemency of the climate all sleep in the open on the roofs, and those who are sick similarly. The Persians have few doctors, yet there are many old men among them. Their garb is a long garment, different from that of the Turks: they tie shawls round their waists, and almost all of them go clothed in cotton stuffs of various colours in imitation of the king. Their chief food is rice with meat, and they do not use such variety, nor dainties as in these countries" (of Europe): "and they are frugal and satisfied with little food. At their banquets they display great sumptuousness, both in the great quantity of viands, as in the preparation and serving of them: Allah Virdi Khan, captain-general of the king of Persia, in a banquet he gave to certain Kurdish ambassadors, put on the table 3,000 dishes all of gold with lids of the same, as I was informed by some Turks who were present. Almost all of them drink wine: they sit and eat on the ground on rich carpets. The houses are of stone, remarkable inside for the great amount of stucco work ornamenting the ceilings and the walls: so they do not employ tapestries. On the street side they have no windows, so that their women should not be seen: and thus the streets are not attractive, nor is the city fine. The Persians are white (skinned), of fair stature, courteous, friendly towards foreigners and tractable: they set store on nobility of birth, which the Turks do not do. They are very ceremonious and use many forms of politeness after their own fashion. There are some of them, who profess to be philosophers and mathematicians, almost all of them to be poets: and they continually have books in their hands. They have many large mosques, where they go to say their prayers, and they allow any nation whatsoever¹ to enter them. . . . Thrice daily, morning, noon and evening, they say their prayers: first they wash, then they spread a carpet or their outer garment on the ground, placing on it a stone . . . and they make many prostrations, calling on God and 'Ali, in which consist all their devotions. They make profession of cleanliness in respect of their bodies, clothes and in everything. They have two kinds of persons dedicated to God's service: one they call 'Mullas,' which is to say 'learned men' or 'doctors' . . . they are esteemed by the lords and the rest, and have mosques in their charge. The other kind of persons devoted to God's service they call 'Darwish,' and they profess to abandon the world more (than the other). They have only one miserable garment, full of patches, over which they wear a sheepskin crosswise over the shoulders: they go barefoot, they profess to disdain money, and some of them will not even take it when given to them as alms: they have no homes, and do not trouble to prepare food for themselves, but sleep wherever night may overtake them and eat whatever be given them as alms. They use some kinds of penances, such as piercing their ears and hanging heavy weights to them: they make a great practice of a rule of life, and in their 'lenten' periods they fast, do not drink wine, make a point of great charitableness, and to practise it in the summertime they stand in the public squares with cold water, which they give gratis to anyone wanting it. Many of them do not marry, and they remain in a community obedient to a superior. These latter have good mosques and pleasant places outside the towns after the guise of our hermits, to which the Muhammadans resort out of piety. They sleep all together in one room on a carpet,² and their sheepskins, without anything else" (as bedding): "and, when they die, they are considered heavenly spirits, and some of them even while alive by the common people, especially if mentally deranged, because then it is said of them that God has deprived them of the use of reason, so that they may be always with Him and not sin. When they come into the towns, both men and women kiss their garments. Nowadays there are hardly any of them who observe that mode of life and, although they may do so outwardly to some extent, in the matter of poverty in particular, they are very sensual and marry, receive money, drink wine, do not observe the fasts, and

¹ Unless in copying the manuscript a negative has been missed and it should read "*do not allow*," this is strange, because in modern times the Shiah differ from the Sunnis in barring entrance of mosques absolutely to all non-Muslims.

² Compare Shaikh Sa'di's proverb: "*Deh darwish ru yak gilim mi-khuspand*," etc. ("*Ten darwishes will sleep on one mat, a continent will not hold two monarchs.*")

"have many other vices, for which reason the Shah does not esteem them, nor does any person of quality, but only the common people. The Persians have one wife, and pay no attention to first and second degrees of relationship in matrimony: they have as many concubines as they can afford: and so they have special places for their wives which they call 'saraglios', into which they allow no man to enter, not even their own sons. The walls of the saraglios are very high; they have no windows looking on the streets, and those women are more closely cloistered than our nuns. They hardly ever go out, not even to the mosques, nor are they allowed to see anyone except the relatives: so that few respectable women are to be found in the streets. When women travel they do so on the backs of camels in certain great baskets covered with cloth or silk,¹ according to their standing, while the men ride on horseback: there are no vehicles. The nobles in their saraglios have many women, some 200, some 300 or more, whom they take with them when on campaign with the army or wherever they go, and I think that to have so many may be more out of pomp and show than for any other reason, because men of 70 and 80 years old have them and take them about with them, and, when they want to extol a rich man, they say 'he has a large saraglio, or that he takes about with him so many camel-loads of women'. Almost all the women who are to be seen in the squares, both in the clothes they wear and in other matters, comport themselves with much modesty; besides the long dresses they wear a kerchief of white linen which covers them completely and they never let their faces or their hands be seen. For the rest they go about and ride through the city.

"The Persians were formerly very superstitious and abhorred Christians, as if these latter were a foul race: thus they would not eat with them, nor from the vessels from which a Christian had eaten,² nor did they allow them to tread on their carpets, nor to touch them: if a Christian were to touch the garment of one, the man would take it off and have it washed. Nowadays, because the Shah shows great regard for Christians, passes his time with them and sets them at his table, they have abandoned all this and act towards them as they do towards their own people: only in some distant districts and among the common folk is it still kept up.

"Besides the Persians the king of Persia has many lands, where the Armenians are his vassals: they must be more than 400,000 households according to what they themselves have told me, 10,000 of these observing the Latin rite in everything. Formerly the Armenians were rich, especially those of Julfa; but now with these wars they have lost everything, and the king has transported them to Isfahan and other towns in the interior of Persia, being distrustful of their being on the frontiers. They have churches, a patriarch, archbishops, bishops (who are all Basilian monks), and many priests who marry (but not the Religious). The king allows them to follow their own rites, to have a church, where they celebrate in public. They are most hostile to the Greek (orthodox) and say that they would rather allow any dog to enter their churches than a Greek. They are friendly towards the Latins and confess that they received their Faith from Rome and that S. Gregory, whom they venerate as their patriarch, made his obedience to the Pontiff. I did not discover any errors in their creed, for they have accepted and endorsed the profession of Faith which was printed in Rome in the Armenian tongue: if there be some error, it is all from ignorance. The only doubt there be is whether they yield obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff; as I have said above, the patriarch and ecclesiastics paid us great respect and told us that they recognize the Sovereign Pontiff as their head, and they swore to it when the Augustinian Fathers discussed the matter of union with them. Only the Julfa folk, nearly all merchants and rich and heads of the rest, put difficulties in the way, and I think they must be schismatics: the rest are very ignorant, as also are the priests and bishops who hardly know how to read (from which arise the

¹ These are the *kajāweh*, already mentioned in a footnote.

² Even up till the Great War of 1914 in tribal country bordering the Persian Gulf the cups and glasses from which European guests had been entertained with refreshments were carefully set apart and specially cleansed by the domestics.

"many wrong practices there are among them, and which many of themselves repudiate).¹ . . . The king, Shah 'Abbas . . . is 34² years old . . . of medium height, rather thin than fat, his face round and small, tanned by the sun, with hardly any beard: very vivacious and alert, so that he is always doing something or other. He is sturdy and healthy, accustomed to much exercise and toil: many times he goes about on foot, and recently he had been forty days on pilgrimage, which he made on foot the whole time. He has extraordinary strength, and with his scimitar can cut a man in two and a sheep with its wool on at a single blow—and the Persian sheep are of large size. He has done many other feats and has found no one to come up to him in them. In his food he is frugal, as also in his dress, and this to set an example to his subjects; and so in public he eats little else than rice, and that cooked in water only. His usual dress is of linen, and very plain: similarly the nobles and others in his realm, following suit, *whereas formerly they used to go out dressed in brocade with jewels and other fopperies*: and if he see anyone who is over-dressed, he takes him to task, especially if it be a soldier. But in private he eats what he likes. He is sagacious in mind, likes fame and to be esteemed: he is courteous in dealing with everyone and at the same time very serious. For he will go through the public streets, eat from what they are selling there and other things, speak at ease freely with the lower classes, cause his subjects to remain sitting while he himself is standing, or will sit down beside this man and that. He says that is how to be a king, and that the king of Spain and other Christians do not get any pleasure out of ruling, because they are obliged to comport themselves with so much pomp and majesty as they do. He causes foreigners to sit down beside him and to eat at his table. With that and accompanying all such condescension he requires that people shall not want in respect towards him and, should anyone fail in this regard, he will punish the individual severely. So the more he demonstrates kindness to his subjects and the more familiarly he talks with them, they tremble before him, even the greatest among them, for, while joking, he will have their heads cut off. He is very strict in executing justice and pays no regard to his own favourites in this respect; but rather is the stricter with them in order to set an example for others. So he has no private friends, nor anyone who has influence with him. Formerly there was in his service a great favourite of his, employed in removing manure from the stables. The Shah promoted him, and the man got to become very rich. In a chest of porphyry he preserved the patched garments which he had used to shake out the manure and the harness of a mule. The Shah went to his house and wanted to see all the riches he possessed. The man showed him (the Shah) everything. When they came to the chest of porphyry, he said that he did not want to open it, because all that he had exhibited belonged to his Majesty, only what was inside that chest was his own property. Finally he opened it: and the Shah commended him for it. He had kept those articles because he knew the king's temperament. While we were at his Court, he caused the bellies of two of his favourites to be ripped open, because they had behaved improperly to an ordinary woman. From this it comes about that in his country there are so very few murderers and robbers. In all the time I was at Isfahan, i.e. 4

¹ The *Report on the Missions to Rome*, by Fr. John Thaddeus in 1624 stated:

"Other Christians residing in Isfahan are Armenians, Georgians, Jacobites, Syrians, Chaldaeans, whom the king found in the towns which he had conquered back from the Turk, and transplanted to Isfahan—there are many of these scattered about the kingdom, living according to their rites. *The first transplantation was in 1602 . . . before that there were no Christians to be heard of, neither in Isfahan nor elsewhere in the kingdom*, but only Jews in fairly large numbers, who had, and still have, their synagogues: the rest of the population was Muslim. By far the greater number of Christians living in the Persian empire are Armenians. . . . The Jacobites were formerly in large numbers, but were forcibly made Muslim, and of those who renounced Christ the Fathers have reconverted some . . . and at present there live more than 600 households of them in the Catholic Faith, and under the spiritual direction of the Fathers in question (see in appendix of Latin Briefs that by Paul V, 3.11.1612). They have their churches, where all come to Mass and are called Syrians; although, because they have so increased in numbers they have been put outside the city by the king, so that they may build houses. But they have no church there, and are urging the Fathers to construct a church for the assistance of their souls. . . . About 2,000 Georgians, who had become renegades, have been persuaded by Fr. John Thaddeus to return to the Faith."

² i.e. he had been born in 1574—as pointed out previously, this must be an error, for it would make 'Abbas only 55 at his death in 1629: it is perhaps a manuscript reversal of the figures, and these should read 43.

"months, there was never a case of homicide. He is very speedy in dispatching business: "when he gives audience, which he does at the gate of his palace, in the Maidan, he finishes "off all the cases that are brought to him. The parties stand present before him, the officers "of justice and his own council, with whom he consults when it pleases him. The sentence "which he gives is final and is immediately executed. If the guilty party deserve death, they "kill him at once: to this end, when he gives audience, twelve dogs and twelve men [? sic], "who devour men alive, are kept ready: he keeps them in order to use the greater severity. "Apart from the officials, once the sentence is given, it is not permitted to anyone to make "any reply: for the person is at once driven off with blows of the sticks of some 30 to 40 "royal farrashes, who stand ready to do this. When he wants to stop giving audience, he "causes it to be proclaimed that no one, on pain of death, may bring him petitions, and, "when he wants to go out of doors unaccompanied, that no one should follow him.

"The like speed in dispatching business is practised by his officials: and his Wazir, or "chancellor, who has charge of all the royal revenues, the dispatch of ambassadors, and "all other affairs, and who is the first person after the Shah, used to dispatch 200 petitions "in a morning and after having sat and given a hearing for six or seven hours would go "out as serene, as if he were coming from taking his horse for a walk.

"There are four councillors of the king—Allah Viridi Khan, his general: 'Ata Baig his "Wazir: the Qurchi Bashi: and one who was his 'governor' and preceptor. The three last "are always with the Shah, and when he gives audience are standing next to him. He "has to be obeyed absolutely: anyone failing in the slightest will pay for it with his head. "And so he has had most of the old nobles of Persia killed off and put in their stead low- "bred persons whom he has aggrandized. In the whole of Persia there are only two of the "old-time governors. To one of them, while with the army in the field, the Shah said "that he was to post a battalion¹ so many paces distant from a river (for he—'Abbas— "gives all orders of importance). Afterwards he (the Shah) summoned him, and the "grandee declared that he had the battalion in such and such a position. Others present "said that he had not: the Shah ordered that, if it (the battalion) were not found there, the "grandee's head should be brought back to him. The messenger went and found him in "the position assigned him by the king; because, although on the previous night, when "they told him in the Shah's name to put his battalion there, he had said that it would be "better in another position, he had not however dared to go against the king's order. "Because of the great obedience they pay him, when he wills to have one of the nobles "killed, he dispatches one of his men to fetch the noble's head: the man goes off to the "grandee, and says to him: 'The Shah wants your head.' The noble replies: 'Very well,' "and lets himself be decapitated—otherwise he would lose it and, with it, all his race "would become extinct. But, when they" (i.e. the grandees) "allow themselves to be "decapitated, he aggrandizes the children.

"The Shah of Persia is very rich, because, besides having the treasure of his predecessors, "he has seized those of the princes of Lar and of Gilan, who were powerful and rich "princes, and others. He has many sources of income and is master over the property "of his subjects. When he knows a man to be rich, he uses blandishments and calls him "his 'father'—which is a sign that he (the Shah) wants to become his heir: so there are "many who are accumulating money for the Shah and live miserably in order to give "him pleasure. There will be a man having more than 200,000 scudi of income and not "spend 2,000 of it in a year. The king assigns these men many posts and revenues, because "he knows that they are hoarding for him, that on their deaths they will leave him as their "heir, while he allots something to their children. These men are private citizens or "gentlemen, for the grandees live at the Court. Annually on the 21st March, which is "the commencement of the New Year with them, everyone makes gifts to the Shah, however "poor he may be—everyone according to his ability. The king's Wazir last year gave him "50,000 Tumans: others 40,000, others less. (The Tuman=10 sequins: 50,000 Tumans

¹ The word *battaglione* is used in the Italian in 1608.

"are 500,000 scudi.) The Shah does not make gifts suitable with his rank: he is not very liberal in giving: he takes them from the Treasury: the expenditure (on the upkeep) of his palace must be small, some of his nobles living with greater show than the sovereign.

"He is very valiant and has a great liking for warfare and weapons of war, which he has constantly in his hands: we have been eye-witnesses of this because, whenever we were with him, he was adjusting scimitars, testing arquebuses, etc.: and to make him a present that will give him pleasure is to give him some good pieces of arms. This is the great experience which he has obtained of warfare over so many years, that he makes it in person and from the first it has made him a fine soldier and very skilled, and his men so dexterous that they are little behind our men in Europe. He has introduced into his militia the use of and esteem for arquebuses and muskets, in which they are very practised. Therefore it is that his realm has been so much extended on all sides—on the East he has taken Khurasan from the Tatars and other provinces and made the rest tributary to him, taken from the Mogul Emperor Kishmir:¹ on the North the principality of Gilan, where there was a very powerful prince, possessed of great treasure because of the ports which there are on the Caspian Sea, and the principality of Mazandaran also: on the South the principality of Lar, where was another prince of considerable wealth: and he has made himself master of the Persian Gulf, and of many other small ports of the Arabs, and of the island of Bahrain where they fish the pearls, which was belonging to the king of Spain: on the West he has taken from the Turks many territories—Ardabil, Erivan, Nakhchiwan, Erzerum . . . Tabriz, Shirwan, Kurdistan, Georgia and other regions, and the fortress of the 'Iron Gates' (=Darband, Demirkapu). He has made tributary the Christian king of Georgia and the Tatars dwelling between the 'Iron Gates' and Muscovy. In the victories he has had over the Turks he has made himself master of many artillerymen, engineers, and of 400 pieces of artillery, which he has carried off to his city of Isfahan, where I have seen them. The king of Persia has become puffed up with conceit by these successes, but far more so on account of the hope he has of gaining greater ones any day by reason of the low water in which the Turks now are. After the king of Persia broke them . . . beyond Tabriz, the Sultan of Turkey has never sent another army against him, nor is he able to send one on account of the many rebels he has all over his dominions—in Baghdad, Syria, Anatolia and other provinces—in such numbers that they do not give him" (i.e. the Sultan) "breathing-space, but put him in danger of losing all he possesses. On the 2nd June last (1608), while I was in Aleppo, fifty thousand of them sacked and burned Smyrna. Thence these men marched on Brusa with the intention of passing over to Constantinople, five days' journey away from Brusa: for that reason the Sultan summoned in haste his captain-general, who was at Aleppo with 60,000 men, the Agha of Janissaries, three Baiglarbaigis (those of Greece, Anatolia, etc.), which was all he was able to get together. (They had been 8 months in Aleppo, and he did not dare to leave fearing lest the rebels outside in the country might once more occupy it.)—The Sultan of Turkey, I repeat, summoned him to return to Constantinople with his army, fearing some rising there. In Mecca, in the Red Sea and in Egypt traders who come from there say that all is ruined, because the Sultan of Turkey had commandeered and removed to Constantinople the camels, horses and men there. The rebels grow daily on account of the Janissaries and others who in large numbers join them: and they have taken as their protector the Shah of Persia, who not to lose the occasion is to march towards Brusa.

"His militia is divided into three kinds of troops: one of the Georgians, who will be about 25,000 and are mounted: they are entitled to pay throughout the year, and have a general commanding: this is the old-time militia of the kings of Persia for the guarding of their persons. The present king has introduced the second force, which is made up of slaves of various races, many of them Christian renegades: their number will be as many again, and they are more esteemed than the first cited, both because they are

¹ Thus perhaps is to be read the "Chesimir" in the manuscript.

"servants of the king, and he assigns posts to them and promotes them. His captain-general and other grandees belong to this corps: they serve mounted and each of them has servants according as he can afford. The third body consists of soldiers whom the great governors of Persia are obliged to maintain and pay the whole year: they will be about 50,000. The captain-general is obliged to keep up and pay 12,000 of them annually: others more or less, and to this end the king grants them, as it pleases him, the territories he captures, and all the revenue these produce: as, for instance, he gave the province of Shiraz to his captain-general and the province of Lar, which will produce many hundreds of thousands of scudi in revenue, of which he does not give a penny to the king. When they (the great governors) accomplish something signal in war, he gives them a governorship which produces greater revenue and sometimes the territory they capture is left to them. All the above-mentioned soldiers, who will total some 100,000, receive pay for the whole year. Then, according to the campaign and enterprise the king wishes to undertake, he enlists others, and, when it be necessary to make a great effort, he has it proclaimed throughout his country that whosoever is his well-wisher should follow him. Then everyone takes up arms.

"The Sultan of Turkey sent two ambassadors to the Shah of Persia to negotiate peace with him, and finally to Tabriz a lady from his (the Sultan's) *saraglio* for a similar discussion with the queen, aunt of Shah 'Abbas,¹ who, they say, is a woman of great intellect and much respected by the Shah, and who always accompanies him on campaign; but it had no result, although on this occasion he sent ambassadors to Constantinople (but he says that it was in order to influence the minds of some Turkish Pashas and make them his friends).

"The Shah has three sons: the eldest aged 22 years:² he has a wife and children. His mother was a Christian, and he is friendly towards Christians and not so quick-tempered as his father. The second son, 12 years old, has a temperament similar to that of his father. The third is aged 5 or 6. He has several daughters. His predecessors were wont to kill off their daughters because there were no neighbouring monarchs of equal rank to whom to marry them, and they (the former kings) did not like giving them in marriage to nobles of the country, for fear of the latter rebelling. In order to eliminate such cruel procedure this present Shah marries them to men of lowly position, as he did when we were there, giving one daughter to a camp commandant, the other to a captain. The eldest son born to the Shah inherits (the throne) even though he be by a slave woman.³ Regarding the religion of the king I think that no one knows what he believes: he does not observe the Muhammadan law in many things, nor is he a Christian. Six or seven years ago he displayed many signs of not being averse to our Faith: God knows whether they were feigned, or came from his heart. In his *saraglio* he has many Christian Armenian, Georgian, Circassian women. I think that he lets them live as they wish, because when I enquired what the Shah did with so many (holy) pictures that were presented to him as gifts and some relics of the Saints, for which he asked, the answer was made me that he used to give them to the women in his *saraglio*. Besides that he is well informed regarding the mysteries of our holy Faith and discourses on the mystery of the most holy Trinity: he knows many examples and allusions which the Saints give in order to prove it, and discourses about the other mysteries—which we know from a man who had the opportunity of hearing him—if he does not about the women in his *saraglio* or about some demon or other. On account of the many disappointments which he asserts the Christians have caused him all this fervour has cooled. With all that he does not detest them, for he converses and eats with them, he suffers us to say frankly what we believe about our Faith and his own: sometimes he asks us about this. To us he has given a house: he knows that we say Mass publicly, he allows whoever may wish among the

¹ Perhaps the widow of Shah Isma'il?

² i.e. Safi Mirza was born about 1586.

³ Such practice had fallen into desuetude, when Zill-us-Sultan, the eldest son, was not allowed to succeed Nasr-ud-Din Shah in 1596.

"Persians to come to it, and we can teach them freely regarding our holy Faith, whenever
 "they make enquiries about it (and they are curious), in order not to make a noise at this
 "very beginning. I believe the king realizes the objective with which our Religious go
 "out there. Till now none of them has been converted: I think they are waiting for one
 "of the nobles or of their Mullas to break the ice. They come to the church out of curiosity,
 "bow before the holy Gospels, and bring the sick sometimes for us to lay the Gospels on
 "their heads and the very Shah himself has had that done by some Armenian priests, who
 "told him that they have done it and that the sick person recovered. There are many
 "churches in Persia, which in ancient times belonged to the Christians and now are
 "mosques: and in them there are bodies which the Persians say perform miracles: the
 "Armenians maintain that these are bodies of Christian saints: and it is not an unfounded
 "assertion, for there were many martyrs in Persia and the Persians do not now know
 "whose remains these be. As regards the results that we can obtain in Persia, we are of
 "opinion, the Fathers my companions who have remained out there and I too, that we
 "can hope for some with the help of the Lord God, because they allow us to preach, ask
 "questions and listen to what is said to them: and we ought not to believe that the truth
 "of the holy Gospel is of less might now than it was in the beginning when it was sowed
 "in the world. . . . For the Fathers who have remained in Persia" (i.e. John Thaddeus
 "and Vincent) "to have picked up the Persian language so quickly . . . they were writing
 "in it before they reached Persia, and now much better, is an encouragement. . . . One
 "of the chief Mullas, much esteemed by the king, by the nobles and by the other Mullas,
 "both for his being of a great family as also for his learning, whom the Shah, on our arrival
 "in Isfahan, charged to find out secretly the business on which we had come, and who
 "had communicated to the Englishman the Shah's decision to expel from his country all
 "Franks and the Augustinian Fathers, this man professes to be much our friend and well
 "disposed to our holy Faith. He has told us that he wants to be a Christian, knowing
 "the falsity of his own religion and, in order to be able the more easily to communicate
 "with the Fathers, he has taken a house close to ours. He is translating the holy Gospels
 "into the Persian language from the Gospels in Arabic, which we brought with us, he
 "being very skilled in that tongue: and although there are such translations he says they
 "are not perfect. He has advised us to proceed little by little in this initial stage, and first
 "gain the goodwill of some Mullas, or doctors in their religion, and, in order for us to
 "do so, he agreed to bring them to our house under the colour of curiosity and to lead
 "them on to ask questions about the Gospel, which he would assist. He is a man about
 "sixty years of age, well disposed towards all the Franks by reason of his having been in
 "Aleppo and had dealings with them: he is well up in philosophy and mathematics, and
 "he asserts that he speaks freely to the king and to everyone. He has given us great hope
 "of making conversions. I think that he is not pretending. Besides the result that can be
 "obtained among the Persians, no small one might be attained among the Armenians,
 "who are innumerable, full of divers errors through ignorance, many of them from having
 "no one to give them (spiritual) help, and from having become renegades. . . . I think
 "that conversions among the Armenians would be assured, and many of them, especially
 "if labourers were sent out by His Holiness, no matter of what nationality; because they
 "do not like, nor listen willingly to those coming from the Indies because of the injuries
 "done to themselves in Hurmuz, still less the Persians: besides, with the support of the
 "Fathers (for whom the Shah would have consideration) the Armenians would be better
 "treated by the Persians, and so they would not" (be so inclined to) "become renegades. It
 "would be necessary to set up some college, where the Armenian boys would learn letters
 "and good conduct. . . . It is unnecessary that the 'labourers' should be well versed in
 "theology (although that can do no harm) because they (the Persians and Armenians)
 "are not very subtle in bringing forward difficulties. What is more requisite is personal
 "holiness, and to set a good example, to have charity and deal pleasantly with the people
 "there, and to become liked. . . . The third requisite is that the 'labourers' who go out

"there should show great disdain for wealth and accept nothing, because, if they accept money, the people think that they go there to accumulate it, or earn their food. They will have to display great poverty in their persons, their garb and their living, and to give away in alms what they have to the poor, especially to infidels. . . . In all this journey of ours, in which we have passed through the midst of many heretics, schismatics and infidels, we have found that nothing has edified them or touched them more than (our) not accepting anything; because there are many among them who go barefoot and perform other kinds of penitence, while others go on pilgrimages, but all of them in order to receive alms. So they think that our Religious go out there with the like object. . . . It will be necessary to provide with money from Hurmuz those who go out to labour there. Satisfaction ought to be given to the Shah of Persia by His Holiness and the king of Spain . . . he complains of them that they have not acted up to the friendship they profess for him, because the Pope, the Emperor and the king of Spain by various envoys they have sent have urged him to wage war on the Turks, promising to support him by doing the same: he says that he made war at their request and has not ceased so doing till now. But during all those years the Christian Princes made no move . . . the Shah says that the Christian Princes have deceived and befooled him. . . . From Spain up till now nothing has been sent, though so many years have passed" (the king of Spain had promised to send him artillerymen, engineers, pieces of artillery, if he permitted the Gospel to be preached in his realms—as the Shah had done, binding himself by a writing, sealed with his private seal). "This present king of France sent him an envoy with letters exhorting him to continue to make war against the Turks, and promising to do the like. The Shah replied by dispatching an envoy of his own: they say that audience was not given him, and that the king of France declined to receive him. When we arrived at his Court we found him so disgusted with the Christian Princes because of the above-mentioned (incidents) that—what he had never previously permitted—he allowed the Muhammadans to commit many injustices on the Armenians merely because the latter are Christians: he gave orders for Franks to be expelled from his country, got ready a force to attack Hurmuz and showed other signs of resentment. . . . It is necessary that His Holiness remedy all this, if he wish to retain the friendship of the king of Persia . . . and it behoves him to do so quickly, because, if it be delayed, action will be of small benefit, seeing that he ('Abbas I) will not welcome it when he becomes more puffed up with the victories, which, it is to be feared, he will gain over the Turks: and he will imagine that His Holiness and the Christian Princes do so then out of alarm, while at present he will accept it and esteem it as prompted by friendly regard. . . ."

* * * * *

At Isfahan meanwhile the rest of the year 1608 had been passed by the two Carmelites in learning Persian, studying the Quran and cultivating the European Christians resident there. Fr. John Thaddeus had at first to ask for action to prevent the common folk from insulting them in the streets, as happened not a little at the beginning—to those barefoot, uncouth, "Darwish" Farangis, as they must have appeared to the Iranis. The Carmelites also caused to be represented to the Shah that by their religion they might not tell lies: this they regarded as important in order to win confidence in their position and work. For Shah 'Abbas I is said to have had drastic ways with liars: and the story is told of him that once on a visit to Mashhad, where he had had the cupola of the famous shrine of the eighth Imam covered with gilded tiles in order to turn the people from going on pilgrimage to Makkeh and prevent money leaving the kingdom,¹ a man who thought to spread abroad the miracle-working power of Imam

¹ This act of economic policy with its national-religious colour, cited in Fr. Eusebius' *Hist. Miss.*, calls for remark as preceding by three centuries a similar measure in the last years of the 1920's by the Persian Government to encourage pilgrimage to the Persian shrine, in order to discourage that to Karbala-Najaf in Mesopotamia.

Riza suddenly raised his voice in the shrine, crying that the Imam had restored his sight. The populace began acclamations, but 'Abbas I had the man brought before him. "How long is it, my good man, that you have been blind?" "I was born blind," replied the cheat. "Now, I guarantee that you can see well," replied the Shah, and showing two colours of his clothes asked what colours they were. "One white, the other red," was the reply. "Ah! you liar!" exclaimed 'Abbas: "you were born blind, and yet immediately can distinguish the colours and know what each is. I do not want it to be a lie that you were blind," and he ordered that forthwith the man's eyes should be removed from their sockets.

A report intended for the Praepositus General in Rome¹ (undated but from its contents evidently written between May 1608 and January 1609, probably in August 1608) by Fr. John Thaddeus, runs:

"... As to us, the Father (Paul Simon) left us with all the money we had, 250 gold "scudi (or ungari), which at 15 giulios each make 375 scudi in Roman money, with orders "that this was to last us for two years—all the rest there was he took with him for his journey. "Expenses in this country are very high, and, though we keep them down, we do not know "whether it will last for a year and a half on the basis of what has been spent up to now. "For we are four mouths to feed—a cook, a lad who serves at Mass and *we two*, which is "the least there can be. To this there must be added that some Spaniards come here, so "poor that it would be great cruelty not to give them at least something to eat; and our "Fr. Paul (Simon) is well aware that he left with me in the house a servant of Fr. Francisco "de Acosta (together with two other servants of his) whom his master sent from Astrakhan "to beg some assistance from the Shah, and he arrived without any money: and, because in "Astrakhan his master helped us to get out of that country, we support him out of gratitude, "and to admit him is an act of charity—he is still in the house at our expense. Here there "is no hope of anyone giving us alms, except the Shah alone. The Augustinian Fathers "are furnished by the king of Spain with 100 pardaos each, and in addition they have some "Mass stipends which are sent to them by their Fathers at Hurmuz. besides the Archbishop "of Goa remits to them money to give in alms to the Armenians: and they have told me "that, when they have need of it, they use it for themselves. There is no need to think "that these Fathers assist us: because we have found out that by experience, and they "themselves have told me that they would be glad to see us go away from here on account "of the insufficiency of funds" (to be obtained locally). . . .

A year had sufficed to enable Fr. John Thaddeus to see more clearly into the character of 'Abbas I than Fr. Paul Simon with his shorter acquaintance and lack of sufficient Persian had been able to do:

"... As to the character of this king, he is at heart a Muhammadan, and all he has "done in the past has been feigned: now that he has won so many victories over the Turks, "he does not care (a jot) for all the Christian Princes and publicly mocks at them because "they do not make war on the Turks, and (if they do so) at their winning nothing. You "should not think that he will give us a church or permission to make Christians of his "subjects: on the contrary he is always trying, when he can, to get Armenian Christians, "Franks and those of any other race to become Muslims. We give Your Reverence a report, "one by one, on the matters about which you left us instructions.

"(a) There are two kinds of Persians—those they call Qizil-bash, who are the soldiers, "and the rest, the people at large, all of them, without exception, excessively sensual in "every form of vice, dissimulating, liars and prone to rob even their own fathers and "brothers. They have the greatest hatred for the Christian religion, and, if outwardly they "show a liking for it and admit it to be true, that is all pretence and policy in order "to extract money or some other advantage. Lastly, compared to them the Turks are

¹ O.C.D. 236 a.

"very good fellows. Usually they will not eat with any Christian, nor do they allow them into their baths, nor do they have any other dealings such as the Turks have with Christians: on the contrary, should any Christian touch the dress of a Persian, the latter considers himself polluted and so goes off to the baths in order to cleanse himself of this, just as they go to purify themselves of their sins. They pay particular attention to the attitude of their king towards foreigners and others, so that whomever he may regard with a malevolent eye they all ill-treat, and whomever with approval they all honour and respect.

"(b) The Turkish language is usually spoken and understood, and the Shah and chief men and soldiers generally speak in it. The common people speak in Persian, and all documents and communications are in that language.

"(c) If it were possible to translate the Missal into the Turkish or Persian language, and to have a licence to celebrate (Mass) in those tongues, we think it would produce some results, as all would understand it, and some out of curiosity would wish to hear it (and it could be said without the elements).

"(d) All Persians, where we have been, follow the religion of Muhammad, although each man understands it after his own fashion; yet up till now we have met no person learned in it, or in philosophy and in natural sciences: and in good reason, if such were as numerous as they think in Europe, there ought to be found some of them in the Capital where the king is living.

"(e) Christian Arabs, traders from Aleppo, and various places over there resort here. *Of Italians we have not seen one because the king of Spain does not permit them to enter India to trade.*

"(f) These Persian people dislike equally Italians, Spaniards, Germans, calling them all 'Franks'.¹ But those with experience have the greatest dislike for the Portuguese, on account of the bad treatment the captains and governors in Hurmuz use towards them.

"(g) With regard to food—the bread is very badly baked, as there is so little wood.

"(h) The sort of men this Shah would be glad to have sent to him are: clockmakers, musicians, painters, those who would be talented enough to construct fountains and such like things; but it is essential they should have a firm belief in the Faith, because otherwise there is a great risk in these countries, from the great freedom there is, and even danger coming from the king himself and the people, that they might be persuaded by acts and words to abandon it. . . .

"... As to sending reports frequently to Your Reverence about affairs here, there is the very greatest difficulty: and, though we have written many letters to Your Reverence, we have no hope that one out of ten² will have arrived there in Rome, because by Aleppo, which is the surest and shortest route, only Armenians go, and they on finding themselves in the slightest peril do not hesitate to throw away the letters. To dispatch a special man to the consul in Aleppo at least 60 scudi would have to be paid, and we have not that money.

"... Till now there has been small success" (in conversions), "for the Muslims are as already described, and the Armenians (so the Augustinian Fathers say) take no account of the Pope unless it be to get some alms or temporal benefit. . . . It appears to us that great results could be gained in this country if there were a college for Armenian, Georgian, Circassian and Persian boys, who might be purchased out of the many offered for sale and if we were to bring them up among us and teach them our habits and standard of conduct, in order to send them to Italy when bigger and they would serve as interpreters: and the king of Persia would not interfere with such work. We do not doubt that, because it is the habit here that the slave must take the religion of his master, many souls would be released from the bonds of Satan, since many of them would become our brethren and others would follow them.

¹ Farangi in Persia, often written Feringhee in India.

² In fact this letter seems to be the earliest in date preserved in the Carmelite archives, and therefore all preceding letters may have been lost or thrown away *en route*.

"The king has given us a larger house¹ than that of the Augustinian Fathers, and in it "we have made an oratory smaller than that those Fathers have, but much more decorated "with the pictures we brought from Rome and some ornaments we have had made. . . .
 "The king does not regard them with so pleasant a countenance as he does us on account "of the past business over the Armenians. Now there is arriving Fr. Antonio de Gouvea, "who was one of those Fathers who came here first: he is being sent by the Archbishop of "Goa, viceroy of India, with letters from the king of Spain and presents for this king of "Persia."

In a different handwriting the letter goes on:

"Fr. Antonio de Gouvea arrived here on the . . . June" (i.e. 1608) "sent by the "Archbishop of Goa, who is now viceroy of India, owing to the death of the last lay viceroy "who died in the post. He brings a letter from the king of Spain in which the latter rejoices "over the victories that the Shah has had over the Turks, but complains that he (the Shah) "has taken the fortress of Bahrain from the Shaikh of Hurmuz, who is his (king Philip's) "friend: he brings various presents worth 1,000 scudi, or a little over. When the king of "Persia learnt that this Father was coming, he did not give orders for any mark of courtesy "to be shown him nor did the Mihmandar go out to receive him, as is the custom, nor have "they assigned him a house, but he has gone to stay with their Fathers, his companions.
 ". . . The king was staying for many days in Isfahan after the arrival of the Father, but "would not give him audience. Later he left for a place of recreation, where he was to "marshal his army and dispatch it against Baghdad this autumn: from that place he sent "word to the Father that, if the latter wanted anything of him, he had better go quickly. "So it will be two weeks ago that he (Fr. de Gouvea) went off:² we shall acquaint Your "Reverence with the issue.

"When Fr. Antonio came, together with his own" (Augustinian) "Fathers and the few "Franks who are here we went to meet him a mile outside the city where he was waiting. "He received us with the minimum of pleasure and with much coldness, paying no atten- "tion to anyone: we accompanied him to his house. Later, in some conversations we had "with him he told us that the king of Spain had brought such pressure on the Pope that "we should not be allowed to come to these parts that His Holiness had sent after us to "Poland to bring us back,³ but we had already passed on thence" (i.e. in Muscovy): "and "that the king of Spain is so annoyed about our coming here that . . . he has given a "good trouncing to his ambassador in Rome, telling him that he had not done his duty in "letting those Fathers go out to Persia by that route, because he (king Philip) did not want "the Shah of Persia to have any other relations but with him. We do not know what harm "we have done to the king of Spain, nor to these (Augustinian) Fathers for them to oppose "us so strongly: and we think that this must be the work of the Devil in order that there "should not be much (evangelizing) success. . . ."⁴

As to the Armenians,

"we have thought it might be well if one of us were to go and live among them here in "Isfahan, as they beg us, and that the other should go and stay with those Armenians in "Nakhchiwan, who for so long past have been without their Archbishop, because that one "whom we left behind in Rome died on the journey. . . . To obtain results such as there

¹ This was the *second* site assigned to the Carmelites, viz. after the representation of Fr. Paul Simon in January 1608, where the Sherleys were married.

² This would date this letter of Fr. John Thaddeus about July–August 1608.

³ This assertion hardly appears well founded in view of the letters sent from Rome to them while in Poland, i.e. till end November 1605, six months after election of the new Pope, nor is there trace of it in the Briefs in the list given.

⁴ In one passage of this lengthy letter the Carmelites cite reproachfully against the bias of the Augustinians and the king of Spain their own "diligence which we used in order to get Fr. Nicolas de Mello freed".

"should be, at least 33 Religious are needed, 21 to keep up a convent with regular, complete "Observance (of the Rule), to learn the language and to translate books, 12 to live among "the Armenians and Arabs and preach to them, giving them an example of an upright life "and teaching them Christian doctrine. . . . A few days ago the Lord comforted us by "(bringing us) two souls, one a Muslim who has become Christian, the other the bearer "of this, who for certain reasons as a youth five years ago became a Muhammadan: he "came to us full of sorrow and repentance. . . . The letters of His Holiness and the others "which Fr. Paul (Simon) left here we gave to the Shah and, though we have daily asked "for an answer, it could not be obtained before the king went off. . . ."

Hardly had the Shah returned from his expedition against the Turks in the autumn of 1608 than from some caprice of his unstable temperament he ordered the Daruga to send 150 soldiers to turn the Carmelites out of their residence and in his name to intimate to the Augustinians that they should share their convent with the Carmelites; on the refusal of the Augustinians Frs. John Thaddeus and Vincent had no other recourse but to go to the public caravansarai. It seemed to them that 'Abbas I must be reasoning that a confederacy of the sovereigns of Christendom, such as he wanted, depended on the Pope's exhortations, and the goodwill of the Pope to that end on the pressure and representations of the Pope's envoys, and therefore that by harassing the latter he might hasten the conclusion of a general league. The action had this effect that on 30.1.1609 Frs. John Thaddeus and Vincent drew up and signed a statement¹ for record:

"The Shah had given the Augustinian Fathers a house (not for them to abide there "always, but rather for them to lodge there and put up there during the time they may stay "here, and one chamber of it they have made an oratory). To us he allotted another house, "and we set up another oratory and furnished it. The owner of the house in which we "live, and the owner of the house in which the Augustinian Fathers live are daily causing "us trouble and persistently moving the king and the magistrate of the town for us to be "ejected from their houses.

"He is moreover a monarch who does what he lists, and, as the mind of the man is "constantly changing, there is no country where there are so many changes as in this one. "When I, Fr. Juan,² had been to the (camp of the) army to see the king of Persia (in view "of the trouble they were constantly giving us about the house) I begged him to grant us a "privilege, a title, which they call 'farman', for the house in which we then were, or for "another. The king gave me the 'farman' in question, for the governor of Isfahan to give "us the house of a scrivener, with running water, which is one of the best in this city. I "returned to Isfahan well satisfied with this; but a few days after my arrival the king "returned to the city and ordered that 150 soldiers should go and turn us out of the house "where we were. The governor" (presumably the Daruga is meant) "said that the king "sent to bid us go and live with the Augustinian Fathers, and he sent to tell them to give us "the half of their house. But they declined for certain reasons to give it, and we were "forced to go and put up in a public *manzil* (i.e. a caravansarai). Afterwards the king's "bidding was that we should be given another house belonging to a poor man, who "is daily importuning and worrying us to leave it, and we fear we shall have to leave that "one soon. . . ."

So, proceeds the joint resolution:

"Considering the instability of this king and his kingdom, and desirous of something "solid for our mission and its objective, which is the harvesting of souls from these provinces "and districts of Persia, after having commended it much to our Lord, we have resolved "that it is expedient that one of us go and make a foundation in Hurmuz which, being so

¹ O.C.D. 237 m.

² He spells himself 'Jhoan'.

"near and contiguous to Persia, is the most suitable place for assisting and increasing the weal contemplated in the conversion of this kingdom. In confirmation of this unanimous opinion we have both signed here

"JOHN THADDEUS of S. Elisaeus

"FR. VINCENT of S. Francis,

"And, in conformity with the above statement, I, Fra John Thaddeus of S. Elisaeus, by virtue of the seniority that I possess, tell your Reverence, Vincent of S. Francis, priest of our Order, to go in the name of the Lord and of the most holy Virgin, and carry out at Hurmuz this holy work, on which depends all the harvest and which is to be the seminary for the missions in Persia. At Isfahan, 30.1.1609."

This 'resolution' is included in a 'Brief Account of matters concerning the king of Persia and his habits'¹, which Fr. John Thaddeus sent away to Rome by Fr. Vincent on 15.8.1609, and that "brief account" makes unexpected and startling revelation of the utter viciousness and personal licentiousness of this monarch, so often vaunted as great:

"When the Augustinian Fathers came here, the king of Persia had taken an Armenian boy of good looks, named John, and put him in his 'haram': the boy did not want to become a Muslim and asked his father to try and get him away from there. The parent went to the Augustinian Fathers and begged them to speak to the king. They did so and asked that, as the boy did not wish to become a Muslim, he should be given his liberty. The king had him brought before the Fathers, and the Augustinian Father asked him if he were a Christian and desired to remain in his religion. The boy answered 'yes'. The king then told the Father to take him away, but, as they were about to depart, the king added in the Turkish tongue to the boy: 'All right: thou canst go off now, but do not think I shall give way and thou canst escape from my hands.' The boy got so alarmed at those words that, when he was again asked what he wished to be, he replied that he wanted to be a Muslim: and so they took him back to the saraglio."

For not only did 'Abbas I, according to Fr. John Thaddeus, 'have five Baigums, queens as it were', and several hundred women in his *andarun*, but 'more than two hundred boys': when he went to any place "he would cause the best-featured boys to be placed at the entrance: he 'would go to the baths accompanied by thirty to forty naked boys': and this Father declares that 'Abbas I was responsible for the introduction of the worst of all sins into this land, 'where hitherto it had been abhorred'. The next charge is to be noted, because of the terribly cruel sequel, so accurately foreseen by the Carmelite.

"He had lent for a term of three years to all the poor Armenians of Julfa² 20 or 30 scudi each and made some stand guarantee for others. One year has passed, and many have spent the money and have not the wherewithal to pay it back and are cogitating how they can escape. We shall see many tragedies when the time for repayment comes. He has many spies to see that the Armenians do not return to their lands" (in Armenia) "without his permission, and we know of no one who has obtained it. Two nephews of the deputy to the patriarch ran away from Isfahan. They were brought back and beaten, and then taken off to the encampment, where the Shah was; he ordered that they should go back to Isfahan, saying that, if by his own return they had not become Muslims, he would have them killed. These lads were so terrified when the king returned that they died of fright.

"He embarks on no undertaking, takes no action without first an astrologer, who accompanies him, saying whether the hour be propitious or not.

¹ O.C.D. 237 m.

² It will be recalled that only in 1604 had 'Abbas begun the transplantation of Armenians to the new Julfa from their old home; doubtless many of the newcomers were poorly off and needed money for grainseed, etc.



ZAIN-UL-'ABIDIN BAIG (ZAINUL KHAN)

Envoy from 'Abbas I to the Emperor Rudolf. Engraving in the Department of the Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, of the painting from life by E. Sadeler, Prague
 [By permission of the Trustees]

"He is very deceitful, will speak to you very caressingly at one moment and in your absence ill of you. When a man is very rich he has some calumny invented about it and has him killed and confiscates his fortune. He trusts no one . . . and thus he will go to the place where the Julfa Armenians are, to the house of a private person and sit there two or three hours drinking with them, finding out what he wants to know. . . . He is also wont to go for a pastime to other places hardly respectable, such as to his kitchen, which is a house separate from the palace, and sit down there, eating whatever please him. Sometimes passing through the city on foot he will come to the shops of the green-grocers, fruiterers and those who sell preserves and sweetmeats: here he will take a mouthful, there another: in one place taste a preserve, in another some fruit. He enters the house of a shoemaker, takes the shoe that he fancies, puts it on at the threshold of the door, and then continues on his way. Once walking about after this fashion he said to the Augustinian Fathers: 'How does what I am doing appear to you, Fathers? I am a king after my own will, and to go about in this way is to be a king: not like yours, who is always sitting indoors!'"

As further evidence of the fractious mood in which 'Abbas I was with Europeans at this time, from the letter of 14.5.1609¹ of Fr. John Thaddeus to his colleague, Fr. Vincent, at Hurmuz it may be noted:

"The king hurls a thousand words of abuse against the (Augustinian) Fathers, and told the one who came out from the Emperor that, if this year our king" (Philip III of Spain) "does not make war on the Turks, they had better depart for their own country, for he will have no need of them. But, although he says this, he is not likely to send them away till he gets the money from the silk which he sent with Fr. Antonio" (i.e. de Gouvea). "God grant that the latter return with the Shah's money, or else they will be in difficulties and put in prison.² . . . His envoy" (Zain-ul-'Abidin Khan Baig) "had written ill of the Emperor and the Christian princes, saying that all their professions of friendship were false, and that all they wanted was for the Turks and Persians to destroy each other and the Muslim religion included.³ So the Shah, when reading this letter, said: 'You will see what a fire I shall set alight in Christendom within two years'. This year he is going to march in the direction of Tabriz: if he be victorious, next year they may look to see him in Hurmuz, because all the time his thoughts are on how to get hold of it.⁴ Mahdi Quli Baig has come into great favour and been made 'Head Gatekeeper' and lieutenant of 'Ali Quli Khan. . . ."

Of that envoy sent by 'Abbas I to Holland—the Shah's glee at the news of the first appearance of Dutch ships in the Gulf has been already quoted—more is learnt from another communication of Fr. John Thaddeus to Fr. Vincent in Hurmuz, dated Isfahan, 6.3.1609,⁵ in the form of an appendix to a letter received by the former from Fr. Paul Simon in Rome, all the more interesting because endorsed by Fr. Vincent as "received in Hurmuz in the month of March," i.e. within twenty-five days the letter had been carried over 600 miles, which speaks well for the rapidity of communication in this reign, infinitely superior to that of the eighteenth century and often to that of the postal service on the same road in the first quarter of the twentieth. It is, moreover, a document probably unique for the Carmelite Order, bearing on it the writing of the three joint pioneers of their historic Mission to Persia.

¹ O.C.D. 237 m.

² Almost prophetic of what happened in 1613. Fr. Antonio de Gouvea, who had thus come in June 1608 from Goa with the letter from the King of Spain, had left Isfahan to return to Spain before March 1609. More will be heard of the consignment of silk, which he accompanied on this occasion.

³ 'Abbas I had probably gauged the position accurately.

⁴ Real foresight far ahead, for it was thirteen years later before he got the English to capture it for him.

⁵ O.C.D. 238 c.

"On 12.6.1608 Zain-ul Khan Baig arrived in Holland: he was there 12 days, and dispatched a Dutch ensign, an engineer, with a letter for the Shah: till now the latter has not received him, nor will he do so for 10 days, as he is away from Isfahan hunting. This ensign is a Catholic and has come by the persuasion of Zain-ul Khan Baig who promised him mountains of gold. This is the news from Holland: the Marquis Spinola for the past two years has been negotiating with Count Maurice" (of Nassau) "for peace, during which period there has been an armistice: a Franciscan Father is working hard over this peace. The terms demanded by the Dutch are that his Majesty should not have that title over Holland and Zealand, which should be a free Republic . . . that *they can send to the East Indies 100 ships to trade*. He says that about *this time last year*" (i.e. March 1608) "thirteen ships left for the East Indies, and now others will be leaving:¹ with the Dutch there are coming other English ships,² making in all some 40 vessels. The letter which Zain-ul Khan Baig wrote to the Shah he wrote in presence of Count Maurice and the Senators of Holland. Zain-ul Khan Baig went off to Flanders and thence through France to Spain: the ensign came through France to Marseilles, where he learnt of the capture of Chios" (i.e. by the Turks): "he embarked on 14.9.1608."

Then the troublesome provision for the safe passage of correspondence between Persia and Europe by way of Turkey comes up again, for the Carmelite Father continued:

"In Aleppo the English told this ensign that the Father" (which ? Paul Simon, or some other?) "had taken the letters from the (Great) Mogul (addressed) to the king of England and had carried them off to our king" (i.e. Philip III), "and so correspondence through the intermediary of the consul for England in Aleppo is not safe. Your Reverence will discuss with Senhor Mario Molino another and safer channel and will inform me, so that I may dispatch letters" (by it). . . .

But Fr. John Thaddeus was evidently uneasy at the prospect of Dutch interference in the already troubled position in the Gulf and so puts forward suggestions:

". . . The principal reason why I am dispatching this special courier is in order to notify the Captain" (i.e. of Hurmuz) "about the ships from Holland and this Dutchman who has come . . . If it would be a service to his Majesty" (of Spain) "that these French soldiers and the Dutchman should serve him in Hurmuz and India, were the Captain" (of Hurmuz) "to make them some favourable offer (particularly with the counsel of your Reverence, and a letter from you) they will go and die in the service of God and his Majesty; but without a letter from your Reverence in no wise will they leave" (Isfahan) "because the French consul in Aleppo has written to them that in" (Portuguese) "India they are detaining as a prisoner the Frenchman who left with Fr. Diego.³ . . . All the same, if your Reverence writes that they can go to Hurmuz, they will go—kindness, liberality and courtesy make emperors, but not hatred, miserliness and arrogance. . . ."

In the portion of this compilation dealing with the various houses founded by the Persian Mission, the opposition met by Fr. Vincent of S. Francis at Hurmuz from the Augustinians and some Portuguese authorities is demonstrated: it was not to be plain sailing for the Carmelites to obtain a foothold there: though their mandate from the Holy See covered the Persian dominions, Hurmuz was juridically part of the Portuguese Indies and not Persian territory. However, Fr. John Thaddeus in Isfahan by now was counting on Hurmuz as a reserve in hand when dealing with 'Abbas I, and he ended his letter of the 6th March 1609 (after saying how he had the previous day been to see the house of Namaki, their former residence, and found the chapel turned into stables) with the words:

¹ Note this beginning of Dutch sea-power and activity in the East Indies and Persian Gulf.

² And of English enterprise too.

³ Diego de S. Anna was one of the first priors of the Augustinians at Isfahan.

"... The Wazir of the city" (Daruga, presumably) "has sent to tell me that if I am agree-able to returning to it, I should let him know so that he could arrange it as I might like. "I replied to him that I would take neither that house, nor the Shah's own residence, unless "the Shah give me a 'farman' " (permitting) "the building of a church. . . .":

and two months later, in his letter of 14.5.1609, after referring to a certain Armenian named Khwajeh Shevelin [*? sic*], who with all his Christian folk, 250 households, had received him on a visit he paid to Julfa, he explained how he had been able to penetrate into this almost forbidden ground for non-Armenians:

"he has already got a house ready for me: it is on the suggestion of the Mihmandar that "I go to Julfa, and to the satisfaction of all the people of Julfa: under the colour of having "to go off to the king's encampment I need a reliable house, where I can leave our effects "safely and instructions for the purchase at the proper time of the supplies" (firewood, etc., meant) "for the winter. In order to escape suspicions and inconveniences in this guise "I am going to and from Julfa. Khwajeh Shevelin wishes to purchase from the Shaikh of "Hurmuz in the island of Qishm two to three leagues of land, in order to make a place for "the settlement of Armenians and Syrians: when that is done, our Order will (be invited to) "make a foundation in the place in question, and a convent be purchased, the church of which "would have three naves for the Latins, Armenians and Syrians. This project Fr. Vincent "was to discuss with the Shaikh of Hurmuz."

In June 1609 the pioneer Carmelites received their first reinforcement from Europe—it will have been already noted in the letter of the Praepositus General Ferdinand of S. Mary (18.10.1608) that he was dispatching Frs. Redempt of the Cross and Benignus of S. Michael. The former was a cousin of the first Commissary-general of the Congregation of Italy, Fr. Peter of the Mother of God, who had played such a part in committing it to a missionary effort, and like him an Aragonese. He had been already a canon of his cathedral town in Spain when, sent to Rome on some business for it in 1605 and permitted to occupy his cousin's cell during the latter's stay in the Vatican as confessor to the Cardinals in conclave for the election of Leo XI, he had become so attracted by the Carmelite Observance as to enter their Order forthwith. Fr. Benignus was a Roman. Jointly they produced, and signed at Isfahan 10.8.1609, a report¹ and narrative of their journey—in Italian, and therefore no doubt written down by the second of these Fathers—parts of which will be quoted because of the light they shed on the state of Syria and Mesopotamia in this year and conditions of travel.

They had made the voyage from Marseilles (16.12.1608) by the same vessel which had brought back to Europe Fr. Paul Simon, a sailing-ship of Marseilles called the *S. Victor*: and the day after the Epiphany, i.e. 7.1.1609, they disembarked at Alexandretta, which at that time was a rather small and ill-arranged hamlet of 80 to 100 'houses', many of them of thatch and boughs, only three, very small ones, being walled. Yet merchants collected there from various parts of the world, and cotton and raw hides were brought in from all around, so that there was an almost continual market: the usual local inhabitants were Armenians, Greek and Syrian Christians, and Turkish peasants, all beyond measure poverty-stricken, so that for the most part they went half naked, and not a few of them used to perish of hunger. Each of these races, however, had its own church and priests, no less miserable and poor than themselves: there were no less than three vice-consuls resident, representing France, Venice and England, who

"administered justice and protected and looked after the interests of their own nationals "arriving there with merchandize, or those in vessels flying their flags. But one single "Janissary was the sole representative of the Sultan of Turkey, and he with great dignity "discharged the office of preventing contraband² goods from being shipped."

¹ O.C.D. 234 c².

² The word *contrabanda* is used—already a legal term in 1609.

There was a 'church' for the Franks there, too, also of planks, but fairly large and well-furnished, which was served by the Franciscans of Terra Santa, with whom the two Carmelites lodged for a week, saying Mass daily and marvelling at the liberty, with which the Franciscans could reserve the Blessed Sacrament and celebrate with open doors and ring the altar-bell.

It was only four short days' march from Alexandretta to Aleppo, but the road, hilly for the most part, was very rough and stony, and the countryside had been almost entirely laid waste and ruined in the recent warfare with the rebels, not a single dwelling being intact. The two Fathers found in Aleppo the Father Guardian of the Franciscans from Jerusalem, come to collect funds from merchants in Aleppo for the upkeep of his convent in the Holy City: they were introduced to the French and Venetian consuls, but did not disclose their destination or object of their journey, not even to a Venetian merchant and his boy, who actually travelled with them all the way to Isfahan.

Aleppo in 1608 was one of the most populous cities in the Turkish Empire: its inhabitants were reckoned at 200,000 souls, largely engaged in trade, every creed and race being represented, with the Venetians some 300 as the most important foreign colony, the French rather more in numbers, the English much less, all of them under the label 'Franks' most respected. The three consuls, when they went out of doors, did so with much pomp and ceremony,

"clothed in red damask gowns, with a guard of Janissaries, and accompanied by all their
"nationals: it was their duty to see that the latter were not ill-treated, and no tort done them
"over their merchandize: for which reason the nationals paid an impost of 2 per cent on
"all their goods to the consuls in question, so that the latter could keep up their position
"with dignity and splendour."

The city was situated on five hills, and was full of fine buildings, and mosques, three of the latter being particularly fine, with lofty cupolas. The castle or fortress, of ancient architecture, and stone walls encircled the city. For lack of a caravan to Baghdad the two Carmelites had to remain in Aleppo all February and till 7.3.1609, when the Venetian consul supplied them with mounts and a baggage camel, the Father Guardian with biscuit for the journey. All the way to Bir on the Euphrates the two Fathers were enchanted with the beauty of the scenery, yet sad to see fine gardens and vineyards all ruined and entirely deserted by human beings, as a result of the civil warfare: during the three nights on the way they had to sleep in the open; having passed the river by boat on the fourth day they were in Bir, a strong and strategic place on a hillock, the walls protected by the river. It was a key position for the surrounding country, and so with a strong Turkish garrison, which derived considerable profit from the large numbers of caravans and travellers. From dues collected the governor kept up six ferry-boats. At Bir the Carmelites were detained ten days (they noted that near by were camped a number of poor Indian traders from the district of Lahore): on S. Joseph's day, 19th March, they embarked on a raft floated on skins and for twenty-two days descended the river by the force of the current. The banks of the river were for the most part covered with thick bush, inhabited by bad people and wild beasts, particularly bears, but along them at certain parts were innumerable Arab shepherds living in black goat-hair tents, who in May each year, when the melted snows on the mountains send the river into flood, retired to the hills and after the summer returned. These people had for garb a shirt and an 'abba of wool woven in various colours: they all carried a bow and arrows and a goatskin of water, which served them both as a water-supply in the desert and as a means of crossing the river when necessary: for, tying in a bundle on the top of their heads their few items of clothing, bow and other arms, with the cloth they wind round their heads, and with the left arm keeping underneath their breasts the inflated waterskins, with the right hand they would strike out across the water with an amazing speed and agility and sometimes carry milk across. Not only men and women but also small girls would thus cross the river. The Fathers found it diverting that at points parties of these people would suddenly come out of the woods on the river bank, throw themselves into the water and swim in company with the raft for considerable distances. These Arabs were

controlled by an Amir of the Desert, chosen by them, who paid tribute to the Sultan and dwelt in tents among them, possessing many thousand horses and accompanied by a mounted force, being able to raise in wartime up to 20,000 men: at certain points on the river his subordinates collected tolls from travellers and traders. The Fathers found the banks of the Euphrates, especially in the part nearest Baghdad, one of the most beautiful sights there can be in the world, for besides a continuous belt of tall palms there were buildings with gardens full of citrons, oranges, lemons and other very fine fruits, various islets in midstream all cultivated, the ground intersected by irrigation canals.

"Baghdad . . . is considerably smaller than the city of Aleppo, both in size and in trade "and the number of its inhabitants, which however is still very large by reason of the great "quantities of merchandize arriving from Hurmuz by water, and from Lahore and Persia "by land with continual caravans, so that there is a huge number of shops so full of all "manner of goods imaginable that spectators marvel. On one side passes the river Tigris, "which serves as a wall for the city for a very long stretch, being exceptionally broad: it "can be crossed by a long bridge made of great boats, some 25 to 30 in number, more or "less according as the river rises or contracts, and these are held together by a very thick "iron chain. By this bridge the city is linked up with a very extensive quantity of dwellings "on the other side of the river. . . . In the city . . . where the wall comes to an end at "the river, there is a fairly large and ancient castle, in which the Pasha, governor of the "city, has his residence: and it is held by a considerable guard of Janissaries, some 400 "of whom are stationed in the city, as guards of the gates and certain main points of "the city, as it were a permanent garrison, on account of the distrust they have of the "population.¹

"Huge taxes are paid: and from them the Pasha extracts countless wealth, as also from "Spanish coin, very large quantities of which—more in fact than any other kind— "are brought here from Aleppo for purposes of trade. For that reason those in charge of "the mint keep many officials, who standing in the streets at certain points search all passers—"by with most exact thoroughness and, should they find a coin on them, take it away from "them to the Mint, whence the persons concerned afterwards receive the value in the "currency of the country, but with a notable deduction. Twice in the street we were "stopped by these men, who after they had with no small roughness searched those who "were in our company, when they came to us did not say a word to us, but very respectfully "allowed us to go on our way, remarking that we were good folk. One of them said that, "even if we had been carrying 10,000 ducats, they would not have taken a farthing from "us. The Venetian merchant besides his own things had taken our trunk in accordance "with local custom to the Customshouse: and, when the merchant in question went there "to recover it and pay what was due on it as well as on the other goods of his own, those "Customs officers having learnt that the trunk was ours, saying that they did not want us "to pay anything at all on it, asked the merchant merely for their amusement to show "them the articles we were bringing, which, they stated, must in any case be very curious. "The merchant having agreed, and many of them having collected to one side they took "much pleasure in looking at the pictures of our Lady we were bringing, asking with great "curiosity about these, as also about all the other things they saw, such as chalice, burse, "corporals, and other articles used in church. They were informed about these, one by "one, by the merchants, and so much time was taken up over it that, it being already very "late and they themselves tired, they proceeded to pass in a lump and in such haste the "merchant's own goods that it was, according to him, of no small profit to him. Later "the same day two of the chief of those Customs officers came to pay us a visit, and, "having told us that they had inspected with great pleasure our effects, they made us "many courteous offers, after which they took their leave. Having learnt through our

¹ It would seem from these remarks that the Turkish government had re-obtained control of Baghdad, and the rebel Pasha dominating it in April 1608 during Fr. Paul Simon's stay there had been ousted.

"interpreter that we did not eat meat, one of them sent us two very fine fish and a great quantity of apples which come from Persia and at that season were much prized in the city.

"This people here" (i.e. the Baghdadis) "are altogether and without exception the most civil of all we have till now met in Muslim lands, and most disposed to show politeness to foreigners, in particular to Religious, so that when we passed through the streets the better class among them were the most prompt to greet us and pay us courtesies, some of them giving us roses and flowers, others inviting us to enter their gardens, of which there are many inside the city and outside, most of them full of orange trees, palms and other fruit trees . . ."

The two Carmelites had attacks of fever.

". . . This happened in Holy Week, when, God giving us courage to continue to fast in the Roman style, notwithstanding that they told us that according to the custom in India it was permissible to eat eggs and milk foods, as did the Portuguese merchant. He also gave us strength to sing the Office solemnly on those three last days of the Passion in the presence of all Christians living in that house, to their consolation and ours: with some poor candles we had arranged a still poorer altar, had the door closed and begged them to put aside all their business affairs: during those three days we got them to keep us company and in the same way would have said Mass on Easter day and given Communion to those good people, who had one after the other already made their confessions, if we had been able to find in Baghdat grape wine, the little wine there is to be found there being made of dried raisins boiled in water and a mixture of dates and like things, which was not suitable for consecration.

"We stayed 29 days in that city, deceived by a Persian head mulcteer, who had promised us four days after Easter to leave and get us to Isfahan in 20 days and who finally, when almost compelled by force, decided to set off on the night of the 10th May. The caravan was rather large: besides a train of 50 or more" (beasts) "there were more than 100 travellers, the majority of them with their bows and among them some 15 arquebusiers: all the same, this road being very dangerous, more so than any other highway whatsoever in the land of the Turks, and as we had news that here a few days previously a large caravan had been plundered, we proceeded apprehensively and with a caution beyond measure noteworthy. The two headmen of the caravan divided all those fit for fighting into several separate groups: so marching in good order from place to place they made the arquebuse-men go on ahead and hold the more perilous passes on the road. Having marched for the three first nights in that order—for we were obliged to halt during the day on account of the great heat—on the fourth, on which we were due to pass a big river across from Turkish territory into that of the king of Persia, there came news from some peasants that 50 mounted Arabs were waiting to rob us at a certain pass. The fear and confusion, which thereupon arose in the caravan, was exceeding great. . . . Having set off, therefore, according to our advice the same evening, and marched all the night away from the road, sending on two men far in advance to reconnoitre the country, we finally found our way at sunrise to that river which divides the Turkish from the Persian dominions. The water had risen to such a height that it reached the horses' cruppers, so that it took us no little to do to cross, and much more labour they had to get the loaded animals across, and much time was lost in preventing them being submerged. At last all were safely across, and those Muslims made many signs of delight at finding themselves on Persian soil, where robbers in particular are rigorously pursued, and out of danger. . . . All the people dwelling in those parts up to near Isfahan, i.e. for more than 20 days' journey, are of the Kurdish race for the most part: they live in great poverty and nakedness, after the manner of the Arabs dwelling in tents, and maintain themselves from what they can get out of the few cattle they pasture. . . .

"On Thursday in the octave of Pentecost, when the gates of the city were opened at daybreak, we finally arrived safe and sound in the city of Isfahan. Fr. John (Thaddeus) was in a small house given him by the king's officials after they had taken away from him that in which Fr. Paul (Simon) had left him, and, this house being known to few, it caused us to wander for long through the city before we could find it. Having finally arrived and dismounted we found Fr. John in not too good health: and when he saw us in that dress he was not a little surprised and even more so the others in the house, who could not be persuaded that we were friars of his Order. . . .

"The Father had as his companions a brother, whom Fr. Vincent, still at Hurmuz, had sent from there when he had clothed him as a choir-brother, and besides another Indian youth, who has taken the habit since, on the 4th July, as well as a Syrian servant who used to go out and buy the necessaries. . . . The same day there came to see us the Fr. Prior of the Augustinians and the Mihmandar, whom we both received in the Franciscan habit, having had no time to make up so quickly our own habits from the cloth we had brought with us. . . . Late that same day the Mihmandar sent to tell us that he had already reported everything to the Shah, from whom he had obtained the appointment of an audience for after dinner the next day. When we were all ready to start off for it there came a fresh intimation that it was impossible to see the Shah that day and that, as he was shortly leaving for the" (encampment of the) "army, we should have to follow him there, where we should be able to have every facility for a talk with him. Fr. John (Thaddeus) replied to this that we were poor and had not the wherewithal, neither tent, nor horses for such a journey; but the answer was given that the king had been notified of this, and by his order the Mihmandar would provide for everything. We were therefore leaving it at that decision, but very upset to think of the numerous inconveniences, the expense and discomforts this journey would cause us, when on Sunday there came yet another notice to say that the Shah, regretting to give us such trouble, had said that he wanted in any case to see us before he departed, and accordingly the Mihmandar himself came to tell us the same and give us an appointment for the following day."

To the Mihmandar the new missionaries explained and showed what poor presents they had brought with them, not daring on such a journey to risk valuable articles. The Mihmandar chose three mirrors, two picture-frames, a painting of our Lady, a model of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, a watch, a fine case of knives, and some crystals and spectacles. On the Monday, having refused the horses offered by the Mihmandar, whom they told that on account of their profession of poverty they preferred to walk on foot like poor men, they set off for the place indicated, a villa some three miles outside Isfahan, whence the Shah was due to start that day for the camp of the army: the road was dusty, the sun extremely hot.

"We arrived about 20 o'clock¹ to learn that the monarch was at the baths, awaited by an innumerable number of mounted men. The Mihmandar, who had promised to introduce us, did not arrive till we were already in conversation with the Shah: so, drawing to one side we proceeded to wait an hour until suddenly the king came out, preceded by his master of the horse, but followed by more than 300 lads from his saraglio: walking hastily he was going to mount his horse when, having caught sight of us, he suddenly stopped and signed to us to approach. Calling for a man staying at his Court with the title of² Agent of the Grand Duke" (? of Tuscany) "to serve as interpreter on this occasion, the Shah at once gave us his hand, which we all three kissed, and asked what news we brought. To that we answered that the Pope, greatly rejoicing at the news brought back by Fr. Paul (Simon) our Religious the previous year, in order to assure his Majesty of his desire to afford him ('Abbas I) satisfaction in those matters for which he had sought it in

¹ Probably about 3 p.m. by *dasteh* time of the Persians.

² His assumed name was Michelangelo Coray, originally Fathullah, a Syrian Catholic from Aleppo, on whose advice at this time 'Abbas relied considerably.

"his letter had at once dispatched us with a reply to his Majesty, in addition to which we were also bringing him letters from the Cardinal of S. Giorgio and the viceroy of Naples. "Having kissed and placed it on the top of his head, according to their wont, and called "to him a German gentleman¹ who had at other times translated Latin letters for him, the "Shah bade him translate the Brief of His Holiness, which he had himself opened, enquiring "at the same time whether we had left Rome before the arrival of Fr. Paul Simon. To "this we replied in the affirmative, and that this Brief was in answer to the dispatch brought "by Fr. Paul: he turned to the person holding the Brief, listened with attention to the "translation of it, which because of the usual impatience and violence of the Shah that "German did briefly and in a shaking voice, with many interruptions. Hardly had he "translated a quarter of the letter when the Shah began to toss his head, saying that those "were mere words. Then, breaking out very angrily, he began to complain bitterly of the "Pope and of the other Christian Princes, who for more than ten years past (he said) had "given him" (nothing but) "words and mocked him with promises that they would declare "war on the Sultan of Turkey, from whom in all that time they had not captured as much "as a single kid. Then he bade the interpreter continue; but after a few more words he "again got angry, saying that all those were empty words and lies and that they were "deceiving him and the Christians did not want to fight the Turks, while he, without any "acquaintance with artillery and his soldiers having no experience with arquebuses, had "for so many years past waged war on the Turks and easily recovered all that had been "filched from his predecessors: that never so long as he had breath would he cease to be "a very bitter enemy of the Turks: just clothed like any poor soldier, and with a pair of "rope shoes,² to which he pointed as he spoke, he was then going off to the army, resolute "to expose himself to any fatigues and dangers, and remain out in the wind and rain with "a morsel of bread like the rest of his soldiers and in a tent. But the Christian sovereigns "did not do that—to their exceeding shame they, intent on their pleasures, were daily "suffering fresh hurts at the hand of the Turk, daily allowing him to rob them of some fresh "country (citing Rhodes, Cyprus and the kingdom of Hungary). And, even if the Emperor "had made peace, why did not the other princes declare war, without sending to tell him "twaddle and lies so frequently?

"To this Fr. John (Thaddeus) made answer that the present Pope was not the same as he "who had first had dealings with his Majesty, and who had died; that it was but four months "since the present Pontiff had begun to negotiate with his Majesty by means of us, and in "that time, despite so great risk to life and such arduous efforts, they had gone to Rome "and returned with the reply—no one else had yet displayed such rapidity and energy—"that they were sure the intentions of the Pontiff were most sincere and that he ardently "desired to satisfy him" ('Abbas I) "and would certainly have succeeded before then had not "certain discords between Christians, which arose years previously, prevented His Holiness "from being able to accomplish more in the past: and that he (the Pope) was hoping to "give him ('Abbas I) satisfaction soon.

"To this the king replied afresh that these were all so many words, that, if the Christian "princes were not agreed, the Pope, who was their head, was the cause of it: because he "was able and ought to compel them to remain on peaceable terms with each other and "unitedly make war on the Turks: and he (the king) ended by saying that he was then going "off to his army, and that now was the time to wage war, but that he would wait patiently "for another four months, during which it would be seen whether what the Pontiff wrote "was mere words, or deeds: at the end of those four months, if he had not had news that the "Christians had taken up arms against the Turks, he was determined that they should all "look out for themselves, because he cared very little for friends such as those who served "him only with lies and words.

¹ His name was perhaps Albert von Schilling, "of a noble Silesian family", mentioned by P. della Valle as becoming a convert and his friend.

² In modern Persia *givah* or *maliki* made of macerated rags, with canvas uppers.

“Then Fr. John (Thaddeus) observed that, if his Majesty said that hitherto he had seen “no sign of friendship on the part of the Christians, the latter might equally well say that “of his Majesty, seeing that in all the time they had stayed in his realm he had given “neither a site nor a church, a thing which the Turks did grant, enemies though they were.

“At once the Shah replied that, were the Christian Princes to make war and capture a “single goat from the Turks, he would then give them both site and church, and would “accommodate them, even if it were in his own house and above his own head, but that, if “they did not go to war, as he had already indicated, within the next four months, he was “determined to give no further credit to their words: and so not only he would not give them “a church, but he would make worse provision for them still, adding that the Turks possessed the Sepulchre of Jesus Christ and little we did for the Christians to recover a place “like that, where we should lack neither church nor sites, and might cease splitting his “head so frequently over the church with pretexts, not one of which in so lengthy a period “had he yet seen put into execution.

“To that Fr. John rejoined that the present Pontiff so recently elected had not had yet “the time to show his Majesty in deeds what he promised in his letters; that the promises “made to the Shah by his predecessor were not binding on His Holiness, in regard to whom “however it might be recognized how much he was minded to give pleasure to his Majesty “from the gesture so markedly rare of His Holiness desiring to send him an ambassador “of distinction, a thing which neither this Pope nor any of his predecessors had ever yet done “as regards any Muhammadan sovereign. But, the Father went on, he and we felt exceedingly pained when we thought how Fr. Paul (Simon) had extolled both to the Frank “sovereigns and in Rome to the Pope himself the munificence of his Majesty the Shah, and “enlarged on the favours which he ('Abbas I) was continually showing to our Christians “and to our Religious in particular—pained that they would now have to learn so much to “the contrary, and that there in Europe it would have to be said that his Majesty had had “the house, which he himself had assigned for them, taken away from our Fathers, and “moreover permitted that inside the place, which these Fathers had fitted up as an oratory “and church, horses should be put and his Majesty's servants make a stable of it and thus “display a marked contempt for the Christian religion, and further, after all this, should “not even cause us to be given another place in which we could conveniently stay and “perform those exercises to carry out which we were under an obligation towards our “Order.

“Beginning with the first argument—the matter of the ambassador—the king answered “that the compliment of dispatching an ambassador, which the Pontiff wished to pay him, “was not so important as we said, since he (the Pope) did the same to the Sultan of Turkey, “with whom he permanently had an ambassador resident: and, when without permitting “the Shah to proceed, Fr. John had promptly denied this assertion, he called up a ‘Turk’ of “high position, his chief chamberlain, of whom he angrily demanded whether the Pope “had an ambassador at the Sultan's Court. This official and others replied in the affirmative, not daring to contradict the king. When Fr. John firmly and bravely retorted that “it was not true, and all those persons were telling lies, the Shah insisted that they should “speak the truth: and then all unanimously affirmed that the Pope had never sent an ambassador to the Turkish Sultan. So the Shah passed to the second point, viz. that of the “house, and said that much had been the twaddle and many the lies which for so many “years the Christian Princes had written, but, without any deeds accompanying them: and “that, were the Christians to proceed to deeds, then he too would follow suit, adding that “the Christian Princes stood at their ease waiting for the plum to drop ripe into their mouths, “i.e. that, when the Turks had been thoroughly shattered by His Majesty, then they, the “sovereigns of Christendom, would promptly come on the scene in order to benefit by his “labours. That was not the way to treat himself, as, if he had not during so many years “warred with the Sultan of Turkey and killed so many of his people, the soldiers the Sultan “had were so brave that, having crushed the Christian might, they would have already

"made themselves masters of the very city of Rome. He concluded by saying that, if for the Christian Armenians who were his slaves he had given sites and churches in so many places at their desire, far more would he have done for the 'Frankish' Christians, if the sovereigns of the Franks had told the truth: and he added that, were the Pontiff to make war on the Turks, he ('Abbas) would not be backward in demonstrating to us his affection and regard.

"To that Fr. John answered that such demonstrations as his Majesty might then make in our favour would be universally considered as purely interested and inspired by policy, not as done out of regard and goodwill towards our Order and religion. The Shah repeated—what he had so many times said—that we should have patience for the next four months, as he also would have: when those months were at an end, if war had not been made, everyone would have his deserts.

"When therefore Fr. John and we perceived that it was inexpedient to continue in such ill fashion the discussion with the king, who was speaking with such scant respect both of the Pope and of the Christian Princes notwithstanding our numerous explanations and replies, having consulted with us regarding the decision to be taken on the matter and moved by the Holy Spirit (as will clearly be seen from the result), he said frankly to the Shah that, since from his words he had understood that his Majesty did not like Christians, he should give us leave to depart, and then we should immediately quit his country. At those words the king stopped short for a little, and changing entirely his manner of speech and considerably pacified, he said that we were his guests and therefore we should remain calm, and see to it that we passed these next four months eating and drinking in all good cheer, and, if during that interval the Christians had taken the slightest step against the Turks, his Majesty would do for us all we could desire.

"To this Fr. John made answer that we had not come to his Majesty's dominions in order to eat and drink; at so great a risk of life and with such hardships we had come to serve him; but, as we now saw that this service of ours was little to his liking, we begged him to give us permission to go away elsewhere, where, if nothing else, we should at least have a place where we could live according to our Rule, because that we were occupying here was not at all to our purpose.

"The king answered that he wished us in any case to remain: in no wise were we to depart. Thereupon he called for the Mihmandar and bade him have a place and house to our taste given us at once, and to that end to conduct us over all Isfahan to inspect all the houses, and that one of his which most pleased us was to be handed over to us conditionally forthwith: he added that he would later give us his very own for a church if the Christians made war in earnest. After that, turning courteously to us he said that he knew very well that blame for the past was not attributable to us, and therefore we should pardon him and be indulgent to him for having spoken so resentfully and strongly; because the Christian kings had hoodwinked him for so many years with their promises, he was obliged sometimes to give vent somewhere or other to his annoyance.

"Fr. John said in reply that we were poor Religious, who had left our parents, relatives and other worldly comforts wholly in order to serve God with greater freedom; to discuss affairs of monarchs was not our profession, but that, bidden by obedience, we had come to serve his Majesty for which reason we were on any occasion ready to give our lives, as he might know from what Fr. Paul (Simon) had done, and we who had recently arrived for that object neither claimed nor desired anything of his Majesty, or of anyone else in the world: and, having said that and presented to him those trifles which we had brought, as mentioned, and twice kissed his Majesty's hand once more, we departed." . . .

"This discussion had lasted more than a full hour, with the Shah standing the whole time and under a very fierce sun, so that his face was bathed in perspiration, which from time to time he wiped off with his hand. Afterwards, going to mount his horse, of a sudden he changed his mind and, going aside with that agent of the Grand Duke and dismissing

"all others—shooting arrows if anyone approached,¹—he had the Brief of His Holiness once more translated to him and minutely: and once more he began to complain of the Christian Princes. He complained of the Pope who, he said, by that Brief had given him mere words: he complained of the king of Spain who, he said, could find means to make war on Christians of his own religion (meaning the Dutch), but pretended that he was unable to find a way of making war on the Turks. He ('Abbas I) had heard that the Dutch and English had combined to make war on the king of Spain, and he trusted that they would avenge him ('Abbas) for the many lies which that king had written him. The Agent in question remarked that events in the past had been of such a nature that the Christian Princes could not have done more: that he had heard that a marriage alliance was now being made between France and Spain, and that as the Grand Duke" (of Tuscany?) "had also now contracted a marriage alliance with Spain, this Pope, who was liked by all universally, would have so much the more convenient an opportunity for uniting all these princes together in a grand and vigorous war against the Turks. Prompted by the English who have frequented this Court, the Shah disagreed with this, saying that that marriage alliance between France and Spain would not come about. The Agent repeated that it would be concluded, and that at the present there were the very best understanding and relations between France and Spain, that in his testament the king of France (Henry IV) had left the king of Spain guardian of the Dauphin, his eldest son. The Shah then said *that* would be seen and began then to speak of us, saying that the two recently arrived from Rome had the look of men of sound judgment and good intellect; that he knew Fr. John to be a good man, but that he became angered too soon and had defied him ('Abbas), thinking to make him afraid: that what he ('Abbas) had said, he had been impelled to do by the great cause given him by so many falsehoods over so many years: and that he had also done so, in order that we should the more warmly write to the Pope, for *he*" ('Abbas I) "knew that letters were flying backwards and forwards, and so it was necessary to speak thus.

"After this he told the Agent to go and visit us immediately, and on his part to succeed in persuading us to write promptly to Rome all that he had said, and put it plainly to the Pope that unless action were taken, and the Christian Princes made war on the Sultan of Turkey, he (the Pope) should not afterwards complain if the king of Persia used harsh measures with Christians from Europe."

"This Agent of the Grand Duke is a great friend and confidant of Fr. John, to whom he is even under no small obligation, so that he came to see us the following morning and reported to us in detail all that had happened to him with the king the previous evening."

In the narrative of Frs. Benignus and Redempt there may here conveniently be interpolated a version in English of that Brief from Pope Paul V, which had so disappointed and annoyed the Shah—the Latin of the original² is given in the appendix:

"Pope Paul V to Shah 'Abbas, king of the Persians.

"O illustrious Shah 'Abbas, most puissant king of the Persians, greeting and the light of the Divine grace to learn the truth, which is salvation and the life of those believing in it!

"The letters which Our beloved son Paul Simon, the Discalced Carmelite friar, lately returned to Us from Persia, handed Us from Your Highness, brought Us very great consolation in the Lord. We are indeed very greatly rejoiced for many reasons. Firstly, forsooth, because with great longing We had been waiting for You to reply to Our letters,

¹ This contemporary picture of the dynamic, restless Persian monarch insisting that the battle-drums should beat and call to arms half Europe, and in his irritation sweating profusely in the sun after his bath, instead of sitting down quietly in the shade, is surely arresting, and enlightening as to his character—not least the detail how he provided against interruption.

² Arch. Secr. Vat. in Arm. XLV, 3, p. 169.

“which We had written to You very affectionately at the beginning of Our Pontificate, so
 “that We might know that You had become reassured of Our particular goodwill toward
 “Your Highness. Next, because We learnt from the same Paul Simon, Our son, that You
 “were in good health and that all Your affairs were prospering and fortunate and that all
 “that concerns the war, which You are boldly and sturdily waging with Our common
 “enemies, was proceeding propitiously. Lastly, because We above all else desire that You
 “should gain confidence in Our people, and deeply deplore that it had been for some time
 “somewhat taken away from them. But We give endless praise to Almighty God, by Whose
 “providence it has come about that the same Paul Simon and his brethren opportunely
 “arrived and were able to remove all suspicions from Your mind. For, as they have
 “informed Your Highness and We by Our letters have notified You, Our plans and exertions
 “are directed towards uniting the arms of Our very dear sons, the Christian kings and
 “princes, against the ungodly and barbarous Ottoman tyrant. Therefore You can under-
 “stand sufficiently from these facts how falsely it had been reported to You that We or Our
 “sons, the princes of Christendom, are unmindful of what is being done in the East. Indeed,
 “if We had been allowed to enjoy greater peace and quietness from the commotions, which
 “have recently been stirred up in these parts, perchance You would have had up to now
 “some plainer sign of the ardent desire, which We have of seeing at long last repressed the
 “fierceness and boldness of the savage Ottoman wild beasts, who have laid waste in the
 “East the vineyard of the Lord, that is to say the Church of the faithful. But that which so
 “far We have been very little able to effect We hope, with the assistance of the Divine mercy,
 “will be accomplished in a short time, particularly since We have been much more kindled
 “and inflamed by Your letters to wage so needful and godly a war. Wherefore We have
 “desired, as soon as We could, to inform Your Highness so that You may pursue the more
 “keenly the campaign You have commenced against Our common enemies. As to what
 “concerns the incidents at Hurmuz, about which You complained to Us in Your letters,
 “We sent for that reason Our beloved son Paul Simon with Our letters to Our very dear
 “son in Christ Philip, king of the Spains, whom We strongly urged to see that peace be
 “kept by every kind of courtesy and the mutual goodwill that exists between us, and also
 “that not only the cause but every occasion for dispute, which might arise in any way, should
 “be removed: and from his obligingness and good sense We promise ourselves that all will be
 “done as desired.

“It was most welcome news to Us that You are about to send to Us, so you write, an
 “ambassador. We shall certainly receive him with very great pleasure and treat him with
 “honour, as is proper. In like manner We are thinking to send to Your Highness an envoy,
 “who will inform You of Our love for You, and of the wish We have of strengthening Your
 “friendship with Our most dear sons, the Christian kings and princes, and of the zeal
 “with which We strive to content You, as far as God shall permit, in those matters which
 “Paul Simon by Your instructions has transacted with Us. Meanwhile You will receive
 “these signs from Us of the especial kindness, with which We uniquely honour Your High-
 “ness, from Our beloved sons, the devout and godly men, John and Vincent, who have
 “remained in Persia by Our orders, and whom We earnestly recommend to You, and with
 “them also the bearers of these letters, Our beloved sons, friars of the same Order of
 “Discalced Carmelites, Redempt and Benignus, who just as they profess the same rule of
 “life, so, We hope, will show that they are endowed with equal zeal, devotion and the
 “adornment of Christian virtue. Each of them will be able to inform You, whenever it
 “should happen that You doubt the genuineness of Our letters (if by chance You should
 “receive any before Our ambassador can reach Your Highness): they know the seal of the
 “Fisherman’s ring and are worthy of confidence. We pray God constantly that He may
 “illuminate Your mind with the light of the Holy Spirit, by which raised to the contemplation
 “of His eternal and flawless beauty You may become kindled with the love of Him and
 “share in His ineffable mercy, and at the same time that the heavenly aid will favour Your
 “victorious arms to the glory of His most holy Name. Given at S. Peter’s, Rome, under the

"Fisherman's ring, the 17th of the Kalends of November" (i.e. October 16th) "1608, and "in the fourth year of Our Pontificate."

And along with that Brief to the Shah was a short note of encouragement and special blessing to Frs. John Thaddeus and Vincent (13.10.1608, Arch. Vat., Arm. XLV, vol. IV, p. 79, No. 170):

"We have given Our beloved sons Redempt and Benignus, Brothers of your Carmelite Order, for you a letter to be delivered to the king of the Persians, in which We reply to that which Our beloved son, Paul Simon, your Carmelite Brother, brought to Us from that king. You will therefore arrange to deliver it as soon as possible to the king, whom you will most carefully inform of Our particular regard for him. What We have learnt of your activities in those parts has been to Our very great satisfaction. Go forward in the name of God. . . ."

and not only did His Holiness send his Apostolic benediction, but he added that he was also "remembering You in Our prayers". To the Augustinians a note of the same date acknowledged with satisfaction the receipt of the letter they had sent by Fr. Paul Simon, by which, so the Pope added, "We have learnt of the really Christian charity with which you received the same Paul Simon and his brethren, when they entered Persia. . . ."

Resuming from the narrative of Frs. Benignus and Redempt:

"The same morning the Mihmandar also came and said that he came to execute the king's orders in regard to the house: he proposed several to us and appointed the following day to go and see them . . . with that he went off. He sent the next morning and on other days divers men of his, with whom we went to view a number of houses, and last of all one, in which had already been lodged a Portuguese ambassador who years back with much parade had come from India to this Shah: and, as it pleased us, immediately it was cleared out and made free for us and handed over to us by those men.

"This is a house bought by the king in order to lodge ambassadors arriving from foreign princes, and for that reason it is in great repute: according to the style of building in these parts it is convenient enough for us: it is situated like an island in the midst of a very large garden, in which there is running water for irrigation, and also another and very good spring water for drinking. It has a large hall, surrounded by many and well-arranged small chambers, and also it is commodious and well-supplied with" (domestic) "offices, as well as having a stable where more than 50 horses could stand.

"In this house then we at once went to reside and forthwith arranged a very taking and reverent chapel in the hall of it, decorating the whole of it with some carpets which we had in the house. We said the first Mass on S. John's Day" (i.e. 24.6.1609) "and, having later made some walls and adapted a place for a choir, we have arranged the domestic offices and other things there in such wise that we are enclosed after the fashion of convents. We sing the whole Office after our own method and the Mass on feast and other days in the manner assigned in our Ordinal, with the greatest confidence of having here shortly a very fine church and an immense convent, in which as a beginning we have in all things introduced the ordinary acts of the community with all the ceremonies, which are wont to be observed in our convents in Italy.

"Now we having gone into the new house, as I have said, there arrived there from Hurmuz Fr. Vincent on the 28th June: and when Fr. John had learnt from him all that transpired over the business of making a foundation" (i.e. at Hurmuz) "he judged it expedient on this account and for many other matters, of which by reason of his brief stay and departure from here Fr. Paul had very little knowledge, that Fr. Vincent should proceed to Rome as soon as possible. Fr. John having taken counsel about it with us and

"decided that it would not be suitable for him" (Fr. Vincent) "to leave without first paying 'his respects to the king (for whom, besides the duty of politeness by which he was bound 'on his return from Hurmuz to go and salute and notify him of his arrival, he was bringing 'letters from the Captain of Hurmuz and the brother of the king" (i.e. Shaikh) "of Hurmuz, 'and also to whom in any case he had to speak about the Shaikh there), it was resolved 'therefore that, as both grounds coincided in indicating it as necessary, Fr. Vincent should 'have a talk with the Shah as soon as might be.

"The latter, as already mentioned, had left to join his army some days previously and, 'since there was no news of his returning then, it was decided that Frs. Vincent and John '(Thaddeus) should go off to the (encampment of the) army to find him, as in fact they 'did at a place called Lugdun [*? sic*], some two days' distance from Isfahan, for which 'place they took horse one day; but, learning on the road the second day that the Shah was 'coming back to Isfahan and already *en route*, they determined to turn back too to Isfahan, 'where two days afterwards they were able to speak to the king, whom they found in a 'garden of his, on Thursday 9.7.1609.

"The Shah was on horseback there, and, when the Fathers had done homage and kissed 'his hand according to the custom, and been greeted by him with a joyful countenance, 'Fr. John Thaddeus spoke, saying that Fr. Vincent, who months previously had gone to 'Hurmuz on the service of the Pontiff and his Majesty, having now got back had come to 'pay his respects and to bring to him letters from the Captain and the brother of the 'king' (i.e. Shaikh) "of that island. Fr. John handed these letters to the king, who took them and 'had them immediately read by his interpreter: afterwards the Father added that he in- 'tended to dispatch Fr. Vincent at once to Rome, and he had come to communicate this 'to his Majesty, so that, should he ('Abbas I) have any business for Europe, Fr. Vincent 'would readily be able to be of service to him.

"In answer the Shah at once demanded to know which Father was to leave, and for 'what purpose: to which Fr. John replied that he himself was sending Fr. Vincent, and that 'they had received certain information as to the letters, which he had written to Europe, 'having been for the most part opened in Aleppo: and for that reason, as there (in Europe) 'they did not know of many matters which it much behoved them in the service of God 'and his Majesty fully to understand, he had determined to dispatch Fr. Vincent, who being 'well-informed would act as a living letter and would report everything to the Pontiff, 'and to the other Christian princes in minute detail. The king at once enquired who were 'the persons in Aleppo opening the letters: to this Fr. John returned that they were curious 'persons who out of an insatiable curiosity to know other people's business and what his 'Majesty was doing in his country occupied themselves in doing this, and further that so 'little could one trust the individuals making the journey to and from Aleppo, that many 'of the letters entrusted to them had not passed through safely. Next the Shah asked 'what route Fr. Vincent would take and if he would go via Hurmuz, to which Fr. John 'replied that that way would not be to the interest of his Majesty, or suitable on account of 'its great length: the Shah assented to that, saying that it was true, but once more enquired 'the route which Fr. Vincent would take. Fr. John replied that he would go by whichever 'one his Majesty directed, and enquired whether the king had any commission for Europe, 'since the dispatch of Fr. Vincent would be forthwith. The Shah answered 'good', showing 'as if he wanted to think about it, and then asked what news they had of Europe.

"Fr. John rejoined that there was a good deal of news from Europe, but, since many false- 'hoods were written about affairs in those parts, not every item could be passed on to the 'king, to whom one ought to speak only after the truth of a matter had been learnt with 'all exactitude. After that the Shah enquired whether it were true that the Dutch had made 'peace with the king of Spain: Fr. John answered that he had so understood: the Shah 'however rejoined that he did not believe it, and that it was improbable, seeing that the 'ships of the Dutch continued in Indian waters to do such damage to the Portuguese, 'subjects of the king of Spain, and in that connection the king asked whether the Dutch

"were Christians and to what nation they belonged. Fr. John returned that they were heretics, very bitter enemies of all good Christians, hated by the Pontiff and the other Christian princes, and rebels against the king of Spain, their natural lord, against whom they were at war, and to finance themselves for the war they went off to sea, playing the part of corsairs, looting and plundering at sea and having no regard for friend or foe.

"The Shah then remarked that, should these Dutch not be making war against the king of Spain, the latter surely would have gone to war with the Sultan of Turkey. Fr. John answered that the power of the king of Spain was such and his cause so just that he (Fr. John) trusted that he would soon destroy that wicked race, and then subsequently wage war on the Turks. The Shah, repeating many times: 'Insh'allah' (If God wills), bade him farewell and departed.

"Things being then in that position, and the Shah not having given a definite permission" (i.e. for Fr. Vincent to leave) "the Fathers were in much doubt as to what to do; because it appeared necessary to suit the Shah's (wishes), and it was most expedient to obtain for the Pope a reply to the Brief, while on the other hand the Shah had not given a decision and for that reason they were apprehensive lest his Majesty should not be pleased for the Father to go, and they were afraid that, were they to mention the matter afresh to the king and he to say definitely and outright that Fr. Vincent was not to go, the latter would be obliged to abandon his departure: and so, commending the matter to the Lord, they decided that in any case there ought to be a fresh conversation with the king, for which the reply to the letter from the Pope offered a patent ground.

"So Fr. John and Fr. Benignus went once more to speak to him ('Abbas I) and, despite all their diligence to that end, for several days this was not possible because, as this Shah is very alert and brisk by nature and for that cause is constantly on the move and, as his palace has various gates, from which he will sally forth, now from this one, now from another for different places, and usually he halts for a very short time, the Fathers were unable, when they went there, to catch him: it was not possible to speak to him inside his residence, as there was no precedent of this king having ever received in it an ambassador. . . .

"One Friday, therefore, the 17th July, while they were in the Maidan near the palace of the king (as they had had news that he was about to come there) to see whether they could speak to him by any sort of means, and waiting about 22 o'clock,¹ the king appeared, having come out by a secret gate and a way different from that by which he was awaited by his attendants. Accompanied by very few people, he came riding a very fine sorrel mare, and having caused the horse to do a jump near where our Religious were waiting in turning he caught sight of the Fathers, and immediately halted. He made a sign that they should approach, and, after giving them his hand, with much courtesy and a very jovial face he asked what they wanted: to this Fr. John answered that, as the time approached for the departure of the Father, whom he had determined to dispatch to the Pope, as he had already told his Majesty on another occasion, he came to remind his Majesty to give instructions for the letter to the Pontiff to be written in reply to the Brief lately brought by the Fathers to his Majesty, as this time the letter would certainly in all safety reach destination.

"The Shah promptly answered that he wished by all means that this should be done, that this was a matter of particular interest to himself and his duty, and that he would not overlook it: in fact he wanted the letter to be written that same night: glancing round to see whether there were anyone to whom he could commit this business, the king with continued affability told the Fathers to wait there a little, so that, should anyone appear, there and then in the presence of Fr. John he would charge the person with this business: and so, continuing to urge on his horse and make it vault many times, and having gone off to some distance from the Fathers he returned after a short interval and told them to wait a little longer, as he was just sending to summon someone, who, he thought, would

¹ Probably *dasteh* time, and about 5 p.m.

"be very suitable for this and, thereupon calling to his master of the horse, he instructed him "what he was to do.

"While then the Fathers were still there waiting, there appeared the two Turkish Pashas, "to whom the Shah at present shows many marks of favour and with whom it is rumoured "he confers on all important affairs. They came on horseback and dismounted in the "Shah's presence and kissed his foot, as they are wont; but the king bade them mount and "ride with him, and, as in the result there ensued much confusion with so many men and "horses, it seemed to Fr. John that it would be well to mount also—it being a customary "thing in the country to do so without the king's command being awaited. Having steeds "ready close by, they mounted them and modestly drew near the rest of the men on horse- "back who formed the king's suite; but the latter, turning and noticing them at a distance "on horseback, at once made a sign to them with his hand to draw near and, when they "had done so but still only to some extent, once more the Shah beckoned to Fr. John to take "up a position on his right hand. When this had been done, Fr. Benignus being somewhat "in the rear, the king commanded him to come alongside Fr. John—all this to the marked "surprise of all those grandees and the people who in countless numbers had collected to "watch the Shah, and they were astonished at seeing him show such favours to us poor "barefoot friars.

"In order to amuse the Shah, some poor people had brought on to the Maidan a number "of rams, which had been trained to fight one another, charging with great fury: each of "the men" (who had brought them) "had an immense ambition that his own ram should "come off the victor: and so the animals had long and furious contests, in which the Shah "took much pleasure

"As has been said, in a row to the right of the king were the two Fathers, on his left the "two Pashas already mentioned and other magnates: and so the king, having ordered wine "to be brought, and that being at once done, when he had himself drunk he bade them "give it also to the others to drink, if they so wished. When the servants had carried some "wine in a golden cup to one of the Pashas, the king, making a page give him some small "pebbles, of which there were many about there, proceeded to flick some of them into the "cup which the Pasha held in his hand, and threw others at him, then turning laughingly "to the Fathers, as if he wanted by this to show that, even though those Turks might have "the name of being high in his favour, he did not for all that esteem them, but rather for "his pleasure he misused them as he liked. The Fathers did not wish to drink in that "(public) place, although it was offered them. The Shah went on saying to one of the "Pashas who had recently arrived at Isfahan that 'these Fathers are good men, whom the "Pontiff his great friend had dispatched to him'.

"While the Shah was talking about this there arrived on the scene an old man, con- "sidered to be a very elegant scribe who is charged with writing an account of all the signal "acts and enterprises of the king. In his ear the Shah spoke for a considerable time "and, from some words pronounced somewhat more loudly and overheard at the end "of the discourse, Fr. John gathered that to him the Shah had given instructions for the "dispatch to the Pontiff, not wishing to do so publicly, because of those Pashas (being "present).

"So much time had already passed in this way that night had fallen and it was hardly "possible to see, when, after taking a turn across the Maidan and dismissing everyone else, "the Shah remained alone with the two Pashas, and so the Fathers, who had been following "him, drew to one side and still on horseback took their leave and saluted him, to which "he made a courteous acknowledgment: they in their turn went off, while the king imme- "diately afterwards entered his saraglio. While they were on their way back to the house "anxiously desiring to know for certain what it was that the Shah had ordered him to "write, so that they might urge him on to get it done, there overtook them on horseback "that aged historiographer, to whom Fr. John thought the king had given the order: and, "to make certain, he greeted him and received an answer in the affirmative to his enquiry

“about the instructions given, and further that the Shah had told him (the old man) to write it that same night: and the old man added that the letter would be a very nice one. The Father then begged him as a favour to finish it as quickly as possible, to which he answered that it was the king’s command and without anyone else telling him to do so he would execute it promptly, and with the most precise diligence: and so quitting him the Fathers returned to the house, considerably relieved in mind.

“The slowness with which all Muslims and those in Persia more particularly move in the resolute dispatch of business is so great that, if they be not reminded and pressed solicitously and with exceptional importunity, one will have the greatest difficulty in obtaining the completion of anything: and thereupon Fr. John judged it necessary to bring himself once more to the notice of his Majesty, so that the latter might recall the business and be induced to press it forward: this, so it seemed to the Father, was the more necessary, inasmuch as from day to day the Shah was on the point of leaving and it would be difficult to follow him afterwards. For that reason, having been informed on the Saturday that the Shah had come out of the Palace, with Fr. Benignus he mounted and rode off to do as they had resolved, i.e. to call the attention of the king to themselves.

“His Majesty was about three miles outside Isfahan, at that place where the two Fathers who had recently arrived from Rome had first had audience: wending their way thither they found the Shah on horseback in a long lane busy distributing horses and camels to soldiers, and till nightfall he continued to be engaged in this, the while the Fathers remained at a distance awaiting him, for they had decided not to speak to him unless His Majesty called for them, because the mere sight of them would suffice for him to understand what they wanted and, when at last the king set out to return to Isfahan and he caught sight of the Fathers, he at once turned his horse toward, and drew up alongside them. So they dismounted immediately, and, when he had given them his hand according to custom, the Shah asked whether they had anything fresh to say. Fr. John answered that nothing fresh had happened to them, apart from what they had said to his Majesty days before, that they had come to remind his Majesty and also to have a sight of his Majesty, whom he highly esteemed. At those words the Shah smiled and, bending to the ear of the Father, said to him that the letters for the Pontiff were already finished and he had written to His Holiness that he should inform the princes and sovereigns of Christendom in his (‘Abbas I’s) name that this Muhammadan king of Persia was saying that the true spirit of God was Jesus Christ, that the legitimate vicar of Christ was the Pope, and that whosoever did not obey the latter could not be considered by any person as a real and good Christian: that, just as he, the Shah, for the sake of his religion for so many years past had waged and was continuing to wage war with the Turks, so also they should do the same for the religion and Faith of Christ, of which the Turks were such enemies, and in that matter like good Christians they should obey the Sovereign Pontiff, who so insistently urged them to do so: should they not do this, they were not Christians, but heretics and infidels: and, just as he, in order to gratify the Pope, his friend, had given to the Fathers sent by the latter both a site and church, in which he allowed them freely to pray and say their Office and as he treated with such courtesy all the Franks who came to his country, so too they ought to go to war, if for no other reason to please the Pope, their father, and recover those places of which to their so great shame they had allowed themselves to be robbed: saying that that would be sufficient to prove to him that they were in fact real and good Christians. should they not do so, he should consider them bastard and illegitimate children. When he had thus spoken, the king asked Fr. John whether in his opinion the letter in such terms would do all right: and, when the Father assented and applauded it, he added that it would be a good thing if with this opportunity his Majesty also were to write to the king of Spain. This reminder was very welcome to the Shah, who said that by all means he wished to do so and to write this too in like tenor, and further that he was thinking of writing to the Venetian Consul in Aleppo

"to have respect paid to persons dispatched from Persia and in addition to see to it that letters should pass through Aleppo to their proper address in Italy without being intercepted: he added that, as during all this expedition all his secretaries were away with the troops, he would have it written by his historiographer, who was a person eminently qualified for composing letters and would do it better than anyone else. Having praised such intentions, Fr. John finally observed, in apology for the Religious who was to go (to Rome) not having come to see his Majesty, that, as there were spies innumerable of the Sultan of Turkey in Isfahan, he was anxious lest, being recognized, this Religious should afterwards come to harm in that country. To that the Shah remarked that precautions were all to the good in (public) affairs, even though in this case there was no risk. He then enquired when the Father (Vincent) would leave and by what road: to which Fr. John answered that he would leave at once and was thinking of going by Aleppo, since that was the shortest route seeing that it was of much moment in his Majesty's service that the Father (Vincent) should arrive in Europe as quickly as possible. Having expressed his entire approval the Shah said that the letter for the Consul would be very apposite and, repeating that he would have it dispatched at once, he went off.

"Things being therefore in this position, on Monday the 20th of July the Fathers had information that the Shah would undoubtedly be leaving on the night of the following day: and so Fr. John, who from his last discussion with the king had got to know that the latter desired to show Fr. Vincent some mark of politeness before the latter left, judged it well to go with him to salute his Majesty and take final leave of him. Therefore on the following morning both mounted and rode off to find the king outside the city in a garden, where, according to the news they had, the Shah was stopping. They met him at the gate, going out for exercise with two servants only: when they caught sight of him they halted and from afar saluted him. He at once sent off to them a servant, who is a very great favourite of his, to inform them that the letters were already written and that he was going for a ride for a short time and would shortly return and therefore would await them at this same place. The Fathers promptly assented, and after they had waited a great while the servant in question came back alone with a message notifying them that the Shah would not come back for many hours, and in the meantime they might well go off to their house and then return at their convenience in the evening. The Fathers went off and in accordance with the appointment they returned later in the day, when they met on the road the Shah, who greeted them and bade them get on their horses and follow, which they did: having gone on a little ahead the Shah dismounted in a drive where there was a large fishpond with a broad water-channel issuing from it. Sitting down on the bank of this, the Shah at once called for the Fathers. When they had approached, he bade them sit down near him and enquired of them what they usually ate, and whether at that time they were eating fish; to this the Fathers replied that at all seasons they could eat the fish in question. Immediately he gave orders for some to be fished out forthwith: when this had been done, and a fair quantity of fish of all sizes caught, he had a fire lighted in the place where they were, and then the fish cooked and supper prepared in the same spot. When this had been done, the Shah in person busied himself in preparing and cooking many of the fish with his own hands and then, causing a number of carpets to be spread in a small space close to the public road, but a little way off, he had supper laid out there. When the Shah had seated himself, he bade the Fathers and others, grandees and among them the two Pashas who were also present, sit down and eat. At the first cup of wine which he drank the Shah, having invited Fr. John to make the sign of the Cross, said in a loud voice that he was drinking to the health of the Sovereign Pontiff.

"After that the king wanted to know where were the other two Fathers recently arrived from Rome and, on Fr. John answering that he had left them at the house, the Shah at once gave instructions for them to be summoned with great urgency: and so two men having been sent off to fetch them in haste and having reached the convent one hour after

"nightfall and delivered the king's message to the two Fathers (Redempt and Benignus), "these latter at once mounted a horse, which had remained at the house, and set off at a "good pace together with these two men to find the Shah.

"The place in question was a long distance from the house of the Carmelites, and so the "two Fathers were no little late in arriving; but the Shah waited for them, continuing to "sit at the table.¹ When they had at last come, they were courteously received by him "and made to sit down at the same table alongside the other two. The Shah was at that "time occupied in correcting some things in the letters which he had had written for the "Pope and the king of Spain, and to which from time to time he caused new points and "expressions to be added, and, according as he recollected them, he would ask the opinion "of Fr. John—whether it was all right thus, and he made the latter translate everything into "a European tongue for the benefit of the two new Fathers who did not know the Persian "language, enquiring of these last two whether he had expressed himself well in these letters, "and when they all decorously praised it the Shah displayed particular pleasure.

"Meanwhile from time to time he continued to converse with those two Pashas about "the Fathers, asking them—after the last two had arrived, and they were all four sitting "together—which did they, the Turks, think was the 'patriarch' sent for the Armenians "by the Pope, in whose praise and that of the Fathers themselves he went on to utter many "compliments: in the intervals he had drink brought to him and, taking some himself at "times, invited the Fathers to do the same. After that he said to the Fathers that he wanted "to give them the 'Three Churches' (Echmiadzin—in the Armenian tongue), the celebrated "residence of the patriarch of the Armenians, and he wanted those the Pope had sent him "to stay there and that they should use the Latin ('Frankish') rite, and rebuild and adapt "(the church) as they might see fit: and he added that he hoped to have to do the like one "day with Jerusalem which, if he could get it from the Turks, he intended at once to hand "over to whomever the Pope might direct. He enquired of the two new Fathers what was "their opinion on all that he had been saying, when they indicated that they were infinitely "obliged with this favour of his Majesty, and Fr. John answered that they would earnestly "pray God to grant many victories to his Majesty, so that he might be able to effect all his "promises.

"During this time the king's attendants had lighted a very great number of candles "around a very large fishpond and above an arch and portico standing near by where the "Shah was sitting and, as it was night, the reflections in the water made the scene beautiful "beyond measure; some musicians of the Shah too from time to time were singing and play- "ing on certain barbaric instruments used in this country, and to the sound of this, seeming "as if transported in ecstasy, the Shah with his hand and his head was making movements "like those of a man bereft of his natural senses—a thing which, they say, is habitual in "this king each time he prays in public, as is frequently the case: and his actions are so "strange that it has caused several of the Fathers to suspect that it is mere pretence and "artifice and that by this means the Shah wants to gull the simple-minded common "people and keep them in the notion they have that he holds converse with high heaven, "whence he receives advice as to all that is necessary for the good government of the "people.

"It was already near midnight, and so the Shah rose and went aside a short time: then, "turning to go, he called for his horse. At this moment Fr. John approached him and asked "him what orders he was leaving about the letters. Once more in the ear of the Father the "king enquired which" (of the new Fathers from Rome) "was the patriarch sent by the "Pope. When the Father answered that he knew nothing yet about that, the king then "repeated that, whoever it might be, as being sent by the Sovereign Pontiff he ('Abbas I) "would receive him with consideration and have handed over to him immediately possession "of Echmiadzin, and, as to the letters, he said that the Father might be easy in mind; "immediately these had been finished he would have them sent by one of his men to the

¹ 'Tablecloth' more correctly, for they all sat on the ground, the cloths being spread over the carpets.

"house of the Fathers, without the latter having to give themselves the least trouble about "anything. With this he mounted his horse and, returning to Isfahan later the same night, "departed from the city, as has already been stated.

"The Shah, whose temperament was very well known to the Fathers, having thus gone "away, they regarded it as certain that, if they did not use fresh endeavours, they would "not obtain the letters and resolved that, before he went farther off—they were informed "that he was at three days' distance,—Fr. Vincent should himself go and request their "dispatch.

"Accordingly on Thursday, which was the 23rd of the month in question, Fr. Vincent "left Isfahan for the camp, where on his arrival he was very cheerily welcomed by the "Shah, from whom during the days of his stay there he received both in private and public "endless marks of esteem: for on various occasions he discussed with Father Vincent both "his journey and other matters regarding Rome. Finally he had given to him the letters "which were remarkable, not only by reason of the titles and flights of fancy and honorifics "used in them, but also in the cover and seal, which was encased in a little box of gold, "and the cover made of most beautiful brocade, a thing which this Shah had hitherto not "been accustomed to do in his correspondence with sovereigns. Since in those letters "the Shah assures the Pope that he has given the Fathers both a house and a church, "where they can pray after their ritual, it appears that the king is pledged and bound to "allow the Fathers peacefully to remain in the house granted them. After having received "the letters, when taking his leave Fr. Vincent asked the king whether he had any message "for the Pope in his name, to which the king replied that he (Fr. Vincent) should tell him "that he ('Abbas I) was then going to march against the Turks, whom, if he were opposed "by a small force, he would immediately cut to pieces, but that, if the Turks should come "against him with a large army, he would immediately make all his people retreat and "himself lay waste the countryside, allowing the enemy to penetrate many days' march "into the interior until he had led them into a position where he could destroy them at his "case, as he intended to do without any doubt. Fr. Vincent having added that, as he was "going to Rome, his Majesty might send two of the Fathers, his companions, who were in "Isfahan, to stay at Echmiadzin, so that he (Fr. Vincent) might carry such good news to "the Pope, the Shah answered 'No': he wanted those who were to go to Echmiadzin to be "appointed by the Pope and the latter himself to send a patriarch, because he ('Abbas I) "desired that it should remain on record in history that in the time of such-and-such a king "and by such-and-such a Pope there was dispatched from Europe a patriarch to reside at "Echmiadzin. Perceiving that this was the firm determination of the Shah, and therefore "judging it unseasonable to return to the matter any further, after taking his leave, bowing "and kissing the Shah's hand, he (Fr. Vincent) left to return to Isfahan, where he arrived "on Monday the 3rd August: he had been away for eleven days, counting the time taken in "travelling and his stay with the Shah. After his arrival the Fathers derived considerable "satisfaction from the result of his negotiations, and they had the letters obtained at once "translated and copied, so that Fr. Vincent might take these with him, for they had learnt "that there was a large caravan, with which were many persons acquainted with the "Father and knew that he was leaving: they suspected that there might easily be some spies "among them, who would reveal Fr. Vincent's identity either in Baghdad or elsewhere in "the land of the Turks: and therefore they judged it expedient for the Father to depart "as soon as possible, before that caravan, which would be marching slowly, entered Turkish "territory. So they set to work to give him quick dispatch . . . and on Monday, the day "of glorious S. Laurence" (i.e. August 10th), "having got everything ready they handed it "over to Fr. Vincent."¹

Then the narrative by Frs. Benignus and Redempt goes on:

¹ From Baghdad Fr. Vincent made his way to Tripoli in Syria and met the Maronite community in the Libanán; he reached Rome early in 1610.



THE GREAT "MAIDAN"

i.e. the square of Isfahan, with the Masjed-i-Shah, the celebrated mosque, built by 'Abbas I;
the A'ala Kapi Palace to the right

"Further, as above we have set down some details regarding the cities of Aleppo and Baghdad, it remains on us an obligation to say something about the city of Isfahan. It should be stated that it is situated in a large plain surrounded in a curve by various hills entirely destitute of trees, which causes the city to be very poorly supplied with wood, the dung of animals being burnt by the poor people to make up for lack of firewood.

"The city must have considerably more than 200,000 inhabitants: there is a large supply of artificers of all sorts of things and, on account of the very large concourse of merchants from India and the kingdom of Lahore in particular, everything is to be found there: there is an abundance of foodstuffs, of fruits especially, of which there is a most remarkable supply with the exception of figs. The houses are universally made of bricks of unbaked earth, as there is no facility for burning them because of the above-mentioned lack of wood: and, as the city is full of very extensive gardens, it has a scattered appearance, so that the streets and edifices are wanting in any stateliness of aspect, with the exception of those built by the present Shah, which are of stone and mortar, very handsome architecturally and many in number. There is a square, which certainly is larger and finer than any other in the world, more than 500 yards in length and broad in proportion, surrounded by porticos full of booths of different merchandise and with a row of fine plane-trees spaced out round it, which gives it an aspect of remarkable beauty. There are various very large dwellings for foreign merchants, called by these people 'caravansarais,' constructed by the present king with royal magnificence and grandeur: and on one side adjoining the city is a very broad road approximately four miles in length, which in parts is graced by various gardens and many handsome buildings, and this too on each side has two rows of very lofty plane-trees, while in the midst of it there flows an artificial channel of running water with which here and there various very becoming fishponds and some fountains in the Italian style have been ornamented. In the midst of this road there is one very fine bridge, one of the most ornate in the world, built by this Shah, by means of which a stream is crossed, which is artificially divided up into various small channels in the city, and provides the majority of the houses with running water, of which they make use in particular for irrigating the soil, which being naturally very arid would be totally barren without this water. There is a rather small castle, or fort, surrounded by earthen walls after the fashion already explained, and of the like material are all the walls of the city constructed, outside it being a fairly broad and deep fosse. Near the bridge mentioned, which will be about one mile outside Isfahan, to the right lies the new town of Julfa, built by order of the Shah a few years ago and inhabited by Armenian Christians, known from its name as 'Julfaini': for, having in past years taken from the Turks their country and destroyed the town of Julfa (there), he caused its inhabitants to be transferred to this new position and here built the new town. All the people of Isfahan dress most plainly in imitation of the Shah, so that nobles and plebeians alike go about dressed uniformly in linen clothes of various colours, reaching to half-way down their legs, with a long piece of cloth rolled round their waist, but without any outer garment.

"The whole race is vile and mean in its conduct: those who show signs of any loftiness of soul are very few in number: they are all so prone to lie that very rare are the occasions when they speak the truth. They are considered very abject and despicable by the Shah: and, although he moves about for the most part almost unattended and without making any outward show of majesty in any way whatsoever, and while going about he converses and discusses matters with all and sundry, yet he wishes to be respected and causes himself to be shown the most profound consideration.

"The king is forty years of age,¹ rather small in stature, yet well proportioned in his members and his face: his nose aquiline and eyes beyond measure brilliant, but he has been so tanned by the sun that his face has remained excessively dark-complexioned. He is curious beyond bounds, so that very often he goes off to different places, incognito and

¹ i.e. Born about 1569, which would make him sixty solar years old in 1629—which tallies with the figure given by Fr. John Thaddeus in his report of 1630.

"unexpectedly: in this he is assisted by the very common clothing he wears, and owing to that mien of his, so little dignified, he is not recognized and has every facility for talking and getting to know anything—which he does with a patience indescribable. He is of great strength and exceptionally courageous: and by his lively temperament so active that, unable to remain quiet, whether indoors or out of doors he is always busy with something so that at many mechanical occupations he excels above the average.

"Of the two male children of this king known, one is aged 25¹ years or more, the eldest born, very tall and stout in body, but of a flaccid nature and generally considered to be a man of a peaceable spirit and not very active: the other will be about 14 years of age,² very like his father in looks and temperament and a marvel in vivaciousness. . . ."

As with other letters of Shah 'Abbas I, the original Persian of this one mentioned as sent with Fr. Vincent is not (apparently) extant in the Vatican archives—with its ornate wrapping and seal it may have been regarded as a curiosity and have gone to the Borghese or other private collection: it is to be doubted whether the version in Italian made by the Carmelites be at all literal or exact; but, with that reserve, it is here given (omitting the prelude of honorifics):

" . . . The letters which I have received from Your Holiness, full of sentiments distinguished by their spirit of goodwill and lovingkindness, have been in the highest degree pleasing and welcome to Me. In like manner We have expressed to You Our reciprocal goodwill, friendship and concord, and by the intermediary of Your envoys or of Our ambassadors We have received no reply to them from which We could know for certain whether they have reached You. Desirous therefore, as best may be, to make up for the failure of those letters, I write this afresh to Your Holiness, in order to notify and inform You that by the favour of the grace of Almighty God I have at last recaptured and once more placed under my rule the very extensive districts, which the Ottoman despot had taken and usurped from Our ancestors contrary to the law of nations and unjustly.

"But I cannot conceal My bitter resentment, nor omit to complain very greatly, that the Christian princes on their part have failed in their promises made to Us so many times, in the fulfilment of which they have not given Me the smallest aid. Notwithstanding this I alone, trusting in the most powerful army of my soldiers, have recovered what was Mine, restoring it to My ancient and rightful authority. The Christian princes ought to do the same, as every duty of correct policy or, as it is said, interests of state, oblige them after My example to claim back by just and praiseworthy force of arms that which the Turk had seized from them and unjustly occupied. The more so as, if I, a follower of the same religious faith as he, am nevertheless for long past his implacable enemy, so for all the greater reason they, who with zeal and sincere love profess the faith of Christ, are bound to hate him the more intensely and fight against him the more manfully, in order to introduce, to carry back and uphold the faith in those places, whence the tyrannies and violence of that accursed and insatiable usurper have driven them for so long past. If they had done this, besides the advantage and glory that they would have necessarily acquired they would have shown and proved by deeds their faithful accomplishment of the obligations, to which the motive of inviolable friendship concluded between us bound them: and, by lending Me the aid of their forces and drawing off from Me a part of the Turkish might, they would have opened for Me a very easy road to subdue it and indeed destroy it. But since very many Christians, who are now groaning beneath the hard slavery of the Turks, always see the vain promises of the Christian princes finish in smoke, they incur very grave reproach from this and do not dare to shake off the hated and most

¹ i.e. Safi Mirza, born about 1584, whereas Fr. Paul Simon's report quoted of 1608 made him then about 22 years, i.e. born in 1586, a more likely date.

² This is only one year different from the age given in Fr. Paul Simon's report, so that Khudabandeh Mirza was born about 1595.

“onerous yoke of those despots. Yet all this does not stop Me from receiving with much kindness and courtesy all Christians who arrive thence, or pass through Our kingdom, and from dispensing to them all favour and consideration, just as We show it to those who, born in various provinces of Our realm, inhabit the same with no less liberty than Our other subjects. All of them I have permitted to build public churches, where they may pray and perform the other functions of the Christian religion, which hitherto was forbidden them and which I have granted them out of the singular affection that I have for Your Holiness. Moreover We have restored to their former condition the ‘Three Churches’ at Erivan, demolished by order of the Turkish general, and have entrusted them once more into the hands of the Religious resident at that place, to whom they belonged: rather We have had them rebuilt in much better fashion than before. And, if other Religious should go to visit them and celebrate the Divine Offices in them in the name of Your Holiness, I shall take care that no one dare to hinder them, or cause them the slightest trouble. In addition I promise Your Holiness most solemnly that, should Allah bless and prosper my arms in such way that I may be able to make myself master of the city of Jerusalem, I shall hand over it at once to Your disposal. Lastly I wish and profess that all My realms and whatever may fall under My sway should be subject to the pleasure and will of Your Holiness. Hence, as far as regards Me, I shall never separate myself an instant from Your friendship. On the other hand, it is requisite that Your Holiness, who from Your rank holds the first place among the Christian princes, should compel them with one accord to arm and send their soldiers to destroy the Turks. In this guise all nations will be benefited, and it will be manifest throughout the whole world that a true and sincere friendship exists between us. On My part I shall fulfil My own duties: God will that the Christians may do the same, sure that, if they do not move, take arms and push forward their army against the common enemy, in the general resurrection and last day of the universal Judgment they will have to give the strictest account of it to Christ Jesus, Whom they venerate and ought to fear, for it will undoubtedly befall them.

“For the rest, should in future Your Holiness have any business in these lands, please indicate it to the Fathers who dwell here, and they will bring it to My knowledge. I shall do the same through their intermediary in regard to Your Holiness, to whom I lovingly commend Myself, praying for You a long and very happy life.

“Given at Isfahan in the year 1017” (1609 of the Christian era).

In addition Fr. Vincent carried to Rome a memorial from the Catholic Armenians of the church of S. Mary in Isfahan city (i.e. not in the Armenian suburb of Julfa, then in course of construction), built by Khwajeh Shevelin. It named among its signatories nine clerics and many laymen: it referred to this church built by them and asserted that, though for want of good teachers they differed somewhat from the Frankish (i.e. the Latin) rite, they were good Catholics. They represented that they were in need of enlightenment in the Faith and besought the Pontiff for a Latin patriarch and also urged that an Italian of high lineage with a following of at least three hundred mounted men should be selected for the rule of the ‘Three Churches’ at Erivan, in order to impress the Shah. This section of the Armenians at the Persian capital was one of the fruits of the labours of Fr. John Thaddeus and separated by him from the schismatic Gregorian Armenians: it may be surmised, however, that it came from that part of the Armenian population of the lower Caucasus, transplanted by Shah 'Abbas to Isfahan and elsewhere, which had been in touch and communion with the Dominican diocese of Nakhchiwan.

On the arrival of Fr. Vincent in Rome early in 1610 Paul V received him benevolently. To dispel the apprehensions of the Shah His Holiness did not name a patriarch for the Armenians. But Fr. John Thaddeus had urged the creation of a college in Rome for Armenian boys to be trained and return as priests to their country; and, 31.7.1610, Cardinal Pinelli replied that the erection of such a college would be undertaken. Doubtless the Pope reflected that, should the missionaries be allowed no scope for proselytism among Muslims, a notable

extension of the Faith should be feasible by working among the Armenians: and his reply to the memorial was thus conceived:¹

"To the Priests, clerics and people of the church of the most holy Mother of God at Isfahan
"in Persia

"POPE PAUL V,

"Beloved sons . . . We have received your letters which Our beloved son, the devout priest and servant of God, Vincent of S. Francis, Discalced Carmelite friar, brought Us. We were indeed greatly rejoiced in the Lord, hearing of your faith and goodness, that you are walking in the hope of the reward of the sons of God, professing the doctrine which your fathers received from the holy apostles of Jesus our Lord, Bartholomew and Thaddeus, and thereafter from the very blessed pontiff and doctor of the holy Roman Church, Gregory the Great, Our predecessor. We also love you from Our heart and always the bowels of Our kindness are moved towards you and We remember you in Our prayers, constantly imploring God to increase in you the gifts of His holy grace, to strengthen your faith, hope and charity, so that constant in your tribulations for the glory of His name you may merit to receive eternal reward. We further rejoice that you have been pleased at the arrival of Our beloved sons, the Carmelite friars, whom We sent to Persia for your consolation immediately after the beginning of Our pontificate, just as, trusting in the Divine goodness, We hope that intercourse with them will daily be more useful to you. For they are tried servants of God and seek His glory and the salvation of their neighbours and with great zeal and the utmost charity ensue it: We earnestly exhort you to have recourse to them for the good of your soul in all needs.

"We have besides derived great comfort from the church lately built there by you in honour of the most holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and We give thanks to the Divine bounty which has revived you by this spiritual consolation, so that you may serve Him the more eagerly. But We pray the only-begotten Son of God, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, that He may daily comfort you more by the increase of His holy grace. And since the most mighty King of the Persians, Shah 'Abbas, shows himself tolerably well-disposed towards Christians and promises Us that he will treat you particularly with humanity, We shall strive, as much as We are able, to fortify this good disposition of his by loving and kindly good offices, so that you may apply yourselves to good works with greater peace and quietness. You also on the other hand take care by giving examples of Christian virtue, mildness, charity, guilelessness and uprightness to win over to you the goodwill not only of the king, but of all Persians, so that the name of God may be glorified in you and the hearts of men burn with the fire of the Divine love. And this through His ineffable mercy may He grant to you, Who according to the exceeding loving-kindness with which He loved His servants handed over to death His only begotten Son, and We bestow Our apostolic blessing, for which you petition Us, with every sentiment of affection.

"Given at S. Peter's, Rome, the 10th of the Kalends of July 1610, in the sixth year of Our pontificate" (= 22nd June 1610).

In that same year the Armenian notable, Khwajeh Safar Azaria, arrived in Venice to recover certain goods of the Shah, which the Republic duly handed over to him. Later he was well received in Rome, being made 'Count' and 'knight', and he was entrusted by Pope Paul with a letter dated 7th Ides July (= 9th July) 1610 for delivery to 'Abbas I:² but these and other replies reached the latter only in 1619, for Khwajeh Safar, for some reason apprehensive of the monarch, went instead to India³ and to the court of the Mogul before returning to Persia.

¹ For the Latin original see Appendix of Papal Briefs.

² It is to be found in Arch. Secr. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 6, p. 35, No. 64.

³ In the Fondo Barberini, Vat. Libr., No. 8565, there are two letters of "Conde Seffer Armeno, factor . . . del Rey de Persia", in Spanish, dated 19.11.1613 from Lisbon and 21.12.1612, addressed to Card. Borghese, thanking him for paternal

As to the main objective of the journey to Rome of Fr. Vincent, the Definitory General of the Order decided to approve of the suggested establishment on Hurmuz island, and appointed Fr. Leander of the Annunciation, another Spaniard, to return with Fr. Vincent. This new recruit, the son of a gentleman at the court of the Spanish king, till not long before his leaving all to enter the Religious life had been a captain in the military forces at Naples: he was further a writer of verse of no mean merit, it is considered. After further discussion with the Sovereign Pontiff, and after the Briefs had been handed over at a final audience the two Fathers left Venice, 28.8.1610, sailing via Crete, Cyprus, Tripoli in Syria to reach Aleppo, 30.11.1610. But it was 20.2.1611 before they were at Baghdad, where they found that city in consternation at a recent victory of Shah 'Abbas, who however failed to pursue it to advantage: with a caravan that departed from Baghdad, 28.3.1611, they entered Isfahan on Whit-Sunday, 21.5.1611. The Shah was presumably out on campaign, and the Brief from the Pope¹ undelivered at the time: its wording may thus be rendered:

"To the King of the Persians,

"POPE PAUL V.

"Most illustrious and puissant Shah 'Abbas,² king of the Persians, greeting and the light
"of the Divine grace. We rejoice exceedingly as often as We receive the letters of Your
"Highness, or news is brought to Us of You, by which We are informed of Your successful
"advance against the common enemy, the Ottoman tyrant, and of Your uninterrupted
"affection for Us and Our sons. For that reason We read with the greatest delight both the
"letters, which that religious and devout man and priest of God, Our beloved son Vincent
"of S. Francis, Discalced Carmelite friar, brought Us from Your Highness. For We have
"learnt fully from them alone not only that all which the Turks, the accursed enemies of
"God and man, had previously taken from You, had been recovered by You bravely and
"nobly, but also that You had entered their territory and were daily advancing. We were
"glad too for the reason that We have understood what kindness You are showing to Our
"very greatly beloved sons, the Discalced Carmelite friars whom We sent into Persia.

"But that You say that You have received no reply to those letters which You had
"sent Us by Your own envoys and Ours is very little surprising, for when You wrote these
"last letters it is probable that those persons, whose duty it was to deliver to You Our
"letters, were still on the road. For to Your former letters, which Our beloved son Paul
"Simon, Discalced Carmelite friar, handed to Us, We replied twenty months ago. To
"the others which 'Ali Quli Baig, the Persian nobleman and shortly afterwards Our beloved
"son Robert Sherley, the English gentleman, Your ambassadors, brought, We sent an answer
"last year. We wish to convince You that, just as We think much of Your Highness, so
"the business about which You wished to treat with Us is very dear to Us, both because its
"importance and seriousness so require and because We desire to show You, as far as We
"can with God's help, how well disposed Our mind is and most affectionate towards You.
"Would that the condition of the present times, altogether contrary to Our desire, did not
"prevent Us, or We would already indeed have shown Your Highness how much We long
"to assist Your victorious arms by attacking the common enemy from this side. But since
"We are unable to do anything else at least We do continually strive with Our fervent
"prayers to God to accomplish that, never relaxing zeal and diligence, whereby We may
"win over the minds of the Christian princes, so that We may the more easily be able to
"push them on to so holy and so necessary a war. This, We believe, Your ambassadors
"have recounted to You by now, if indeed, as We greatly hope, they have reached You safe
"and sound: and this beloved son of Ours, Vincent of S. Francis, will also describe to Your

kindness, and to stir them to arms against the Turks; and in Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 6, there are three Briefs, Nos. 80, 81, 82, recommending to the Emperor Rudolph, to Philip king of Spain, and to Cosmo Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, 28.7.1610, 'Safar Azaria, the Armenian, who has come to deal with the business of the king of Persia'—regarding sales of silk possibly, as well as hostilities against the Turks.

¹ Arch. Secr. Vat. Arm. XLV, 6. For Latin original text see appendix to this compilation.

² Spelt Abbahas.

"Highness yet more fully. We render profound thanks to Your Highness for the signal goodwill which You profess towards Us and this holy Apostolic see, of which You have given such admirable tokens about those 'Three Churches' (i.e. Echmiadzin) to be restored, which the Turk, that most savage enemy of piety and religion, had destroyed at Erivan, and in regard to Your reception and care for Our sons, the greatly beloved Discalced Carmelite Religious: just as even We are unspeakably grateful to You for the most generous offer of the holy city of Jerusalem, should Almighty and merciful God grant to You to seize it out of the hands of the enemy, as We pray of the Divine benevolence. On the other hand We also shall make it Our business to respond, as much as We shall be able with God's help, to Your lovingkindness with all the services of goodwill and friendship. For the rest We most earnestly commend to You this Our beloved son, Vincent of S. Francis (and his brethren), in whom You will please repose entire confidence in those matters which he will relate of Our love for You, just as You will be able with like reliance to entrust to these same Religious whatever You may wish to notify to Us: and so once more with all the affectionateness of Our heart We implore for Your Highness the light of the Divine grace. Given at S. Mark's, Rome, the 10th of the Kalends of July, 1610, in the sixth year of Our Pontificate" (= 22.6.1610).

The military preparations made by 'Abbas I in 1609, to which these narratives of the Carmelites bear testimony in casual fashion, and his messages to Pope Paul V were no empty demonstrations or words: in 1610 a large Turkish force under Murad Pasha was sent against Tabriz. Forewarned, the Shah had the region between the frontier and Tabriz evacuated, so that before reaching Tabriz the Turks had consumed their provender and found themselves threatened by famine: on their sending a large part of their force to forage ahead well inside Persian territory 'Abbas I fell on it with a more numerous army and defeated the Turks so severely that reports of the time (doubtless wildly inaccurate and exaggerated as all Persian estimates in figures, except those of distances, are wont to be) placed at 10,000 the number of Turks put to the sword.

On that the Shah, scheming to crush the Turkish empire once and for all, and at the same time relieve himself of this constant preoccupation on his N.W. frontier, bethought himself to make fresh entreaties to the sovereigns of Europe for joint action on their flanks of the Turkish dominions—strangely enough, it would seem, in the face of repeated disappointments of his hopes in this respect and his irritation and outbursts, of which these preceding narratives have furnished concrete examples, he continued to cling to his plan for simultaneous and allied action: and, as his envoy this time, he fixed on Fr. John Thaddeus. The arguments which his envoy was to urge differed, however, considerably from the military and naval operations demanded in 'Abbas I's recent letters and embassies and were what in modern parlance would have been termed an appeal for economic sanctions to deprive the Turks of the sinews of war, harking back indeed to clause 6 of the proposals put forward by Sir R. Sherley to Pope Paul V.

'Abbas I,¹ then, at the very beginning of 1611 explained to Fr. John Thaddeus that, instead of sending an Armenian, as first intended, he wished the Father to proceed to the Czar of Muscovy, the king of Poland and the Pope, and propose to them the diversion, via Russia and Poland, of the valuable trade to Europe in Persian carpets and silk and other goods from the route across the Turkish dominions, and thus to deprive the Turkish government and trading population of the funds and capital derived from Persian sources. (It will be subsequently noticed that the Shah personally had a stake in the export of raw silk.) The Carmelite's protests that he had no acquaintance with such commercial business and was unfitted for work so far removed from his profession as a friar, that without permission from his superiors and the Pope himself he ought not to leave Persia, were brushed aside by the Persian

¹ The following is mainly a précis of the account given in *En Persia*, pp. 71–80, by Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus, quoting Fr. John Thaddeus' statement, and that of Fr. Redempt, but also makes use of MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, by Fr. Eusebius ab Omnibus Sanctis.

autocrat with the assurances that he took on himself to obtain (*post factum*, that is) the consent of His Holiness and of the Praepositus General of the Order, that the business was simple and could be accomplished by a Religious travelling unostentatiously better than by others, for the main reason that it was to inform the Christian princes of his ('Abbas I's) plans, and finally that Fr. John's knowledge of various languages would obviate any need of interpreters. Seeing that the Shah had made up his mind in advance and was resolute, Fr. John Thaddeus deferred a definite answer until after consultation with the other Religious, whose opinion was that the task should be accepted inasmuch as it might prove useful in alleviating difficulties of the mission and, since it was to finish at Rome, it might be considered to fall within the scope of the functions of ambassadors between Shah and Pope. Fr. John Thaddeus, however, demurred on yet another ground, and this in public one day when he suggested that the grandees and notables of Persia might well and reasonably object to a humble European friar being given such a position of ambassador from the Shah of Persia. Again 'Abbas I had his answer ready:

'The grandees of his empire had been taught to respect as law the smallest hints from 'his lips: in Persia he alone gave orders, without the need of anyone's opinions.'

Then, raising his voice, he called out to the courtiers present:

"Fr. John goes as my ambassador to the Grand Duke of Muscovy, to the king of Poland, "and to the Pope":

and, putting his hand on the shoulder of the Carmelite, added:

"His word is my word . . . this Father has come to me with the Pope's words, and his "word has always been the truth—"yes, yes: no, no": and of all the Franks who have come "to my court no one has pleased me as much as this Father—and one other, a Portuguese "with a white beard" (his name was Fr. Jeronimo de la Cruz).

From the letters and credentials made out in the name of Fr. John Thaddeus it is known that, apart from the commercial question of the silk and carpet trade, 'Abbas I desired that the Cossacks should repair the fort of Zarzu [*? sic*], whence he had dislodged the Turks, and which he needed so as to protect and cover against Turkish raids the passage of caravans. Moreover, besides promotion of an alliance of the sovereigns of Christendom for operations of war against the Turks, on which 'Abbas I still vehemently insisted, the Carmelite envoy was charged to invite His Holiness to dispatch a 'Khalifeh' (so Persians style a Catholic Religious superior, or bishop, to this day) to undertake jurisdiction over all oriental Christians in his kingdom, Jacobites, Greeks, Georgians and Armenians of Julfa and the rest, and thirdly to offer on the Shah's behalf to construct in place of the churches of Greater Armenia which had been greatly damaged in the wars three new churches in the new Julfa or suburb of Isfahan—one for the 'Franks', i.e. Europeans and Uniats with a prelate to be sent from Rome, one for the Armenian monks, the third for Armenian secular priests. He was further offering to construct at his own cost one convent for the Carmelites, another for the Augustinians, and a house for ambassadors sent out from European courts.¹

¹ In this connection it should be mentioned that there exist in the Carmelite archives—not in the original Persian, unfortunately—what purport to be translations of an ordinance issued by Shah 'Abbas I in the month of Sha'ban 1023 A.H., i.e. in September 1614 (*vide* MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 26, bk. 2, and *En Persia*, part 3, p. 74, quoting Fr. Blas, vol. II). That is a date (coinciding almost with the attack on the Portuguese at Gāmburūn fort) difficult to reconcile with any fresh approach by the Shah to the Pope or European monarchs: the MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, it is true, assigns the issue of the edict to 1615, and takes it as an affirmation of the genuineness of the Shah's intention when in 1611 one of his commissions to Fr. John Thaddeus dispatched to Europe was: "to inform the Pope that he, 'Abbas, wished to have built in Julfa three churches in the place of those at Echmiadzin—one for the 'Franks' (Armenians) and their prelate to be appointed by the Pope, another for the Armenian monks and their metropolitan, the third for the Armenian secular priests. . . ."

If the Persian original was genuinely and actually promulgated, the importance of this edict lies in the intention the Shah had of transporting and transferring the stones from the historic building of the patriarchate at Echmiadzin to the new

The Shah arranged for servants and guides to accompany Fr. John Thaddeus, and an Armenian trader named Lucas was put in charge of expenditure and transport during the journey, on which the Carmelite Father was also accompanied by that Armenian Catholic or Uniat, the priest Khwajeh Shevelin: the foundation of a college in Rome for Armenian youths was one of their joint hopes for the outcome of this expedition. 'Abbas I had directed that they should travel by way of the capital of Taimuraz Khan, the Georgian subject-sovereign, on the death of whose wife the Shah had written letters of condolence: and according to the description left in a report by the Carmelite Religious the Armenian clerics and layfolk in the chief town of this chieftain conducted Fr. John Thaddeus in procession to their church, where they made a profession of submission to the Pope and Catholic creed, and where he afterwards celebrated Mass. Both here by Taimuraz Khan and at Darband by the governor (25.3.1611) the Carmelites were invited to establish branches of their mission.

It is strange that, in the words of the proverb 'once bitten, twice shy', Fr. John Thaddeus had not been warned by the experience of his brethren and himself in 1607 that, for the successful or early accomplishment of his mission, it were best to avoid venturing again inside Astrakhan, or within reach of Ruthenian malice. For that town was in greater confusion and partisan strife than during the anxious time he had passed there some four years previously: suspecting that the mission of the Carmelite friar was not genuinely one to the Grand Duke of Muscovy, but a pretext for machinations against him by the Shah with the king of Poland, and instigated by the Ruthenian schismatics, the governor, a certain Ivan Dmitrivich Forastin, confined him with all his company in a house, which was more properly a prison. In a written statement by the Augustinian priest N. de Mello, at that time living in Astrakhan, Fr. John Thaddeus was alleged to have been even tortured and by his own account in peril of his life

Julfa. In order to transfer the spiritual and religious allegiance of the Armenian deportees to their new home in central Persia. A re-translation into English from the Italian and Spanish versions would run:

"We give Our royal order to the priests, monks, governors, grey beards, citizens, and leaders and pastors of the Armenian people living in the royal capital of Isfahan.

"The grace, favour and infinite compassion of the Shah-in-Shah grants you the fulfilment of your desire. Let those specified above know how between Us, the great king, and their Christian Majesties, particularly the greatest and highest throne in the world, His Holiness the Pope of Rome, and his Majesty the king of Spain, there exists the most perfect regard and friendship, and that between Us and Christendom there is unity without division or any dissension whatever. . . We desire and deem it well to publish that all Christians, from whatever place and nation they may be, shall be at liberty, and for ever, to come and go, to abide and to trade in Our country.

"And because in the city of Isfahan, Our royal capital, many persons of every nation and religion congregate and reside in it, We desire for the convenience of the Christian folk to build here a very lofty and spacious church which, once it is finished and decorated to all perfection, We shall give to the Christians, so that they may say their prayers in it and perform the exercises of the Christian Faith and religion.

"To this end We have sent a person to His Holiness, to ask the Pope to name a prelate for the Fathers and Religious of the Christian Faith and religion, so that he may give directions for prayers and the Divine Office according to the use and rite of the Christian religion, and that We too may share in the merit of those prayers and religious exercises.

"Next, since there are a quantity of great stones, standing in the 'Three Churches' (i.e. Echmiadzin) at Erivan, and the buildings of the 'Three Churches' have remained altogether in a ruinous state, lacking the strength to remain standing through people having tried to excavate and extract relics, and similarly through the priests living at the place digging up the bones of the saints buried in that church, selling them to heretics and leaving the place in ruins, so that it is losing its great beauty and reputation, for that reason We command that the stones in question should be extracted from that place and brought to Our capital of Isfahan so that, when the" (building of the) "great church is completed, they may be placed therein, and whenever the stones are brought to the capital all of the Christian Faith should gather together and go to meet them with the greatest delight and festivity.

"And so we command that all, together with you, Mir Shams, Wazir of our sovereign capital, and Muhub 'Ali, tutor of the young men in our palace, should replace the stones in question in the best place and that most suitable in your opinion: and that further you should summon one of our most talented royal architects, and that he should inspect together with you the place and site assigned for the said church, viz. behind the royal garden called Bagh-i-Zarishk "[? sic], and make in wood (? on a table) or on paper the model and plan of the great church for the priests and 'Frank' Fathers: and it is Our royal will that you take Us to see it. After We shall have inspected it We command all officials and masterworkmen in our capital to assist in this construction, so that it may be perfect.

"It should be known that it is right to grant this farman to the Christians, so that they may be contented.

"Given in the moon of Sha'ban 1023 A.H."

The writer of MSS. *Hist. Miss.* in the early eighteenth century, Fr. Eusebius, with access to papers no longer to be traced, supposes that the stones in question included certain venerated because by tradition on one Christ had appeared to S. Gregory the Illuminator (it was kept covered with red cloth), others had formed the coping of the well in which S. Gregory was thrown. But, if the great church was to be erected in Isfahan itself, not at Julfa, it would seem that 'Abbas designed to add it as one of the show edifices of his capital.

at times, although for most at least of the three years in which he remained in forcible detention in that town he was able to celebrate Mass and give the Sacraments to a number of Armenian and Vlach Uniats. At some point in the detention the Armenian Lucas contrived to get away and report to the Shah the arrest of his envoy and the evil pass in which he stood, whereupon 'Abbas I had his instructions conveyed to an Armenian dwelling in Astrakhan to supply his envoy and party with provisions and all they needed: and, the governor of the town being sometime afterwards put to death in an outbreak by the populace, the Shah sent a message to the Ruthenians threatening that, unless Fr. John Thaddeus were surrendered by them, safe and sound, he ('Abbas I) would proceed there in person with an army and liberate him. Finally the Grand Duchess Marina Georgina, a Catholic Pole by origin, widow of the duke Dmitri,¹ who had known the Carmelites in Moscow in 1606, arrived in Astrakhan and interested herself in obtaining the Father's release, and enabling him finally to be given a safe-conduct for Persia: 'Abbas I, whose menaces by then had increased to warning the Ruthenians that he would come and put them all to the sword, showed his appreciation of the good offices of the Grand Duchess by writing to Fr. John Thaddeus and directing him before he left to hand over to her as a present the whole cargo of a Persian vessel lying there—enough to pay for the upkeep of 600 soldiers for six months. The embassy to Moscow, Poland and Rome was abandoned—presumably because the letters of the Shah for the European sovereigns and his own credentials had been taken from Fr. John in Astrakhan, and destroyed: it was mid 1614 before he was once more back in Isfahan from this mission so disastrous for himself, and possibly for the business he was to have arranged:

“ . . . Fr. John Thaddeus, Prior of the convent, arrived in Isfahan from Astrakhan, on “the eve of Pentecost of last year, 1614.”²

One reason for its non-continuance may have been the fact that in the meantime, in 1611, 'Abbas I had agreed to a peace with the Turks, by which all his recoveries of territory formerly under Persian domination, but occupied by the Turks since the time of his grandfather Tahmasp I, were recognized. He had incidentally in 1609 obtained the restoration of Kandahar (in southern Afghanistan) which had been treacherously surrendered to the Mogul Emperor.

* * * * * *

During the three years' absence of Fr. John Thaddeus a number of small incidents and events occurred to influence, in the sum, the position of the Catholics in Isfahan and of the Carmelites in particular.

Three French prisoners and one German had been taken in his victory over the Turks in 1610 by Shah 'Abbas, who had them brought to Isfahan, where they were given new clothing and ten Tumans apiece and handed over as free men to the Carmelites. Having squandered the money, they professed to embrace Islam, enticed by all the material benefits promised them: later they recanted and, after being kept by the Fathers for several months, were safely got out of the country.

Some 50 schismatics of the Chaldaean rite made their submission this year, and their priest for 14 months was lodged in the Carmelite convent: an Armenian with a small 'parish' followed not long after. Then one of the teachers of Arabic the Fathers had - a Syrian Jacobite priest—was converted and brought over to the Roman obedience a number of his rite. In

¹ The daughter of the Polish “palatine” or magnate, Mniszek, married at Moscow to the ‘false’ Dmitri, 8.5.1606, on which day the Boyar nobles instigated the citizens to a rising, after his murder on the 17th of that month she was captured in 1608 by the second ‘false’ Dmitri, who subsequently married her. His strength lay largely in S. Russia, where the Don Cossacks supported him.

² Fr. Leander of the Annunciation, undated narrative (to be identified as of 1615) in O.C.D. 236 a.

this the Fathers had been aided by that agent or envoy of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the Syrian Fathullah, *alias* Michelangelo Coray, already mentioned, above whose signature, dated 14.5.1611, a written declaration is recorded in the report of Fr. Redempt quoted.

To this individual, a good Catholic, 'Abbas I had given his confidence and favour so freely in appreciation of the Syrian's counsel and knowledge of affairs of the world that, when in 1612 that reckless agent for the sale of the silk in Spain, Jangiz Baig, returned without its proper value to Persia, the angry Shah not only had him killed at once but gave a formal order for all the property, real and personal, lands, slaves, children and even wife of the said 'Jangiz Baig' to be handed over to Michelangelo Coray. Such largesse at the expense of a Muslim and Persian in favour of a Christian foreigner caused surprise among the courtiers; but Coray himself soon realized that he was expected to make a return for it by embracing Islam. To his honour he preferred to safeguard his soul and, having been commissioned by the Shah to inspect the mines all over Persia and see how they were being exploited,¹ after having been to confession and Communion in the chapel of the Carmelites, one day he departed south with a large number of attendants, giving out that he would begin his survey in that region. When, however, he turned away from the district of the mineral deposits (possibly lead and silver on the borders of Kirman province, or sulphur in maritime Fars) and approached the sea, his followers became suspicious and plotted to kill him: it was with difficulty that with a few Christian servants he escaped inside the Portuguese fortified area at Gāmburūn, shot at by Persian guards on the frontier: and thence in due course he was enabled to sail for Goa. Although this untoward result was largely, if not altogether, due to his own misplaced zeal for Islam, Shah 'Abbas was hurt in his pride by this flight and escape of his confidential adviser: and there will be noted hereafter the importance the Persians gave it, and it assumed in the story of the Portuguese settlements.

In regard to the Armenians, and in particular those known as the 'Frank' Armenians from the district of Nakhchiwan near Erivan, a number of whom had been among those transplanted to the new Julfa and for whom 'Abbas I had had a church built and mooted the appointment from Rome of a bishop or 'khalifeh' already mentioned, there were even in 1611 significant references to the ominous loans made them by the Shah, to which Fr. John Thaddeus had called attention in his notes on the character of 'Abbas I.

In a letter² the Praepositus General in Rome remarked:

"... I am sorry about that debt of the poor Armenians, so harassed by the king, and, 'should the Lord not send us some money to come to their aid, I shall arrange for a letter 'to be dispatched to the Shah 'ne gravet Christianos debitores'" (that he do not burden the Christian debtors).

It seems likely that to this last intention having been implemented is to be attributed the motive for that intervention on behalf of some Chaldaeans by Pope Paul V in his Brief of 3.11.1612 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 8, p. 60, No. 165), which began:

"Illustrious and most puissant Shah Abbahas, king of the Persians, greeting and the 'light of Divine grace. The fatherly charity, by which We are moved over the freedom 'from harm of Our beloved sons the Christian faithful dwelling in the very extensive 'dominions subject to Your Highness, whom We have frequently already recommended 'to You, urges Us to commend them again, as effectively as possible, to Your royal benevolence, inasmuch as it was reported to Us that they were so oppressed with heavy penalties 'that, because of their extreme indigence, those in particular who are called Assyrians or 'Jacobites and inhabit Isfahan will be compelled, unless You take pity on their misfortune, 'to sell their very children in order to pay the impositions levied. This matter grieves

¹ Another trait of intelligent activity on the part of 'Abbas I. Actually the mineral deposits of Persia worth exploitation in the modern sense, particularly for sale abroad, are negligible—excluding oil, of course.

² See *En Persia*, vol. III, p. 90.

"Our spirit exceedingly, the more so because the aforesaid Assyrians, as We have been informed, having rejected and abhorred their ancient (doctrinal) errors, have returned to the bosom of the Holy Roman Church. On this account trusting in Your exceptional goodwill towards Us demonstrated to Us by so many and such manifest signs, We ask Your Highness pressing for Our sake to be so good as to give orders that Our beloved sons the Assyrians, especially those of Isfahan, are treated more leniently. For We greatly desire that they should begin to perceive some fruit of their conversion and have some evidence of Our paternal love and the peculiar care and solicitude, with which We busy Ourselves for their welfare. Although We do not in the least doubt Your kindly regard for Us, and without any doubt hope that this Our letter will be of great assistance to those unfortunate people in approaching Your Highness, still, because fatherly affection can be restrained by no bounds in risks (threatening) one's sons, We have further desired that Our beloved sons the Discalced Carmelite Religious, who attend to the salvation of the souls of the Christian faithful of Isfahan, should request this of You in Our name, and express to You in more detail with what great affliction of spirit We are affected on this account, and how You will have bound Us to You (by obligations) if, as We trust, You show Yourself complaisant to this Our request. . . ."

That Brief was accompanied by another of the same date (Arch. Vat. XLV, vol. 8, p. 61) addressed to the Carmelites at Isfahan to the effect that he, the Pope, had received a letter from the priest Hermes (? for Hurmuzd) relating his reconciliation to the Roman Church by the hands of the Assyrian George Grigor:

"but We wish Our letter to be handed" (i.e. to the Shah) "only if you consider it opportune: should you do so, then you should follow it up with an effective recommendation, for We ardently desire that (these) dear sons, the Assyrians, should experience the utility of their conversion in the material as well as the spiritual man."

George Grigor had also brought to Rome a letter to the Pope from Ignatius, Patriarch of the Jacobites, to whom Paul V also replied on 3.11.1612, referring to

"that communion which Your predecessor, John, Patriarch of the Jacobites, through his envoy the Abbot of the monastery of St. Anthony of Egypt had with the Holy Roman Church 130 years ago in the reign of Eugenius IV . . .",

and before returning to Persia George Grigor was created a knight of the 'aurata militia', according to a Brief addressed him on 25.11.1612 (Arm. XLV, vol. 8).

Following the Chapter General in Rome in May 1611 and the election of Fr. John of Jesus Mary as Praepositus General, two more recruits for the Persian mission were dispatched in the persons of Frs. Bartholomew Mary of S. Francis, a Neapolitan noble by extraction, and Louis Francis of the Mother of God, a Spaniard. At Isfahan Frs. Vincent and Leander remained with Frs. Benignus and Redempt till the end of 1611, but in January 1612 (the last-named having been elected Superior in the absence of the Prior, Fr. John, in Astrakhan), Fr. Vincent accompanied by a lay brother set out for Hurmuz, where an oratory was at once adapted in a house and opened in accordance with a licence obtained by Fr. Benignus in a visit the latter had made in 1611 to Goa in order to collect funds.

With their increasing numbers monetary needs began to involve the Carmelites in difficulties at Isfahan and, as no sufficient Christian source in Persia itself was available and Europe too far off, it was perhaps natural for the Fathers to look to the generous Portuguese in the capital of their Indian possessions as a likely source for obtaining a regular supply. That and the idea of recruiting novices who in time might become Mass priests weighed most, it is to be presumed, with the protagonist of this development, Fr. Vincent of S. Francis, who already by April 1612 had gone on from Hurmuz to Goa. He was bearing from Rome for the

Archbishop-elect of Goa a Brief from Pope Paul V, dated 22.6.1610,¹ commending Fr. Vincent and the Carmelites:

"... Because Our beloved son, Vincent of S. Francis, of that Order was about to 'return to Persia, whence some months previously he had come to Us . . . since he had 'intimated to Us that you could be of great assistance to him, We have desired to recommend him and the brethren of his Order, who dwell in Persia, earnestly to You. . . ."

Similarly to the Viceroy of the Indies the same day the Pope wrote (Arm. XLV, vol. 6, No. 44) that, as the Shah of Persia had received them so well, it behoved the leading Christian faithful to promote the establishment of the Carmelites all the more keenly. In fact, not only at Hurmuz, but even more in connection with the opening of a house at Goa, the Carmelites were to encounter strong opposition from the Portuguese Augustinians (who were already piqued at the Carmelites invading their special sphere, as it seemed to them, in Persia and Hurmuz) and from the Council of Portugal and the viceroy's council in Goa. Details of those difficulties and their gradual surmounting can be read in the portion of this work dealing with the establishments separately (at Hurmuz and Goa).

After purchasing a building, in which he was permitted to make an oratory not open to the public, Fr. Vincent returned from Goa to Hurmuz, where he was back on 20.2.1613, and proceeded to construct a more substantial oratory on the ground floor, and to make plans for forming a convent independent of that at Isfahan, in which he had been encouraged by the Praepositus General writing direct, and bidding him make Hurmuz and India his special care:

"little is wanting to make it a convent, if that should seem convenient, and your Reverence 'give your 'bene placet'." ²

If this were approved, Fr. Vincent wished the Praepositus General to obtain Papal Briefs addressed to the Portuguese authorities respecting the occupation of more houses and land in Hurmuz by the Carmelites.

To the reader looking back on the troubled story of the Persian Mission as a whole it would seem arguable that this branching off into work in the Portuguese Indies and possessions was a dereliction from the original and main purpose of the Mission, i.e. the evangelization of Muslims and work in Persia itself, to be regretted in that it entailed not only much friction and discord in later years, but a squandering of man-power and divided interests. The missionary trained linguistically for Persia was to be wasted in a Portuguese environment, and vice versa. There was really no basis of training and preparation requisite for missionaries, no races among whom to work, or methods of access to them, common to Portuguese India and Persia. One is bound to conclude that it would have made for a consolidation of energy and concentration on Persian difficulties, had the two fields of work been kept entirely independent, and staffed direct from Rome as two separate entities with no common Vicar Provincial and no interchangeability of workers, cleric or lay. And more is the pity, the objects of the foundations set up in India disappeared within forty years or less—after that time neither funds nor recruits as choir brothers were being contributed by Goa to Isfahan and the other posts in Persia.

It was not only at Hurmuz and Goa that Fr. Vincent desired to have houses of the Order, but also at a place called Tatta some way up the mouth of the Indus in Sind: after Easter 1613 and his return to Hurmuz from Goa, at the request of Portuguese traders there for a priest he delegated Fr. Louis Francis with a lay brother to proceed to Tatta, where in due course a permanent mission developed.

The letters of Fr. Vincent of S. Francis, mostly dated in June 1613, after his own return

¹ Arch. Secr. Vat., Epist. ad Principes, Arm. XLV, 6, p. 18.

² Vide Fr. Vincent's letters, O.C.D. 239 b, No. 1 and No. 5 of 3.6.1613.

to Hurmuz from Goa, contain a mass of interesting historical and disciplinary observations: the motives and logical ground for founding on Hurmuz island:¹ how the Augustinian Hermits had on their part come direct from Portugal, exclusively in order to make a foundation there by order of the king, Dom Sebastian, and then later gone to Goa and started a house there contrary to the wish of that king's successor, the cardinal Dom Enrique. Despite official opposition the Carmelites received an encouraging welcome from the population of Hurmuz and were doing well when the fortress fell in 1622: already at mid 1613 they were seven Religious in that Residence.

As to Goa² Fr. Vincent revealed the origin of the Portuguese distrust of Italians, and particularly Italian ecclesiastics, a distrust which went so far as to bar entry into Portuguese territories and was to contribute many years later to a troubled chapter in the Carmelite Mission as can be read in some detail in the separate account of the house at Goa elsewhere in the present compilation. Fr. Vincent asked in fact for several Castilian Religious, men of letters, to be sent out in preference to those of other nationalities.

Coming from the strict Observance in convents of Europe, like Fr. Leander and others, no doubt, Fr. Vincent was, it would appear, unfavourably impressed by the relaxations followed in Persia in certain respects and in his letter No. 3 of 3.6.1613 to Rome expounds his own views as to the norm to be followed. He considered two local lay servants for each Religious house was sufficient: that it should not be permissible to ride on horseback, but only on mules, and that not more than one mule might be kept in the stables; that Portuguese and Italians in need should not be given monetary assistance, and that on the business of lay-people the Superior at Isfahan should not be allowed to leave the city and go off after the Shah: that Carmelites, when they visited the Armenians in Julfa or others, should abstain from drink and food in their houses. Very sensibly he urged the Praepositus General to insist on all missionaries persevering with the study of the Persian language and the practice of speaking it, in order to liberate themselves from the need of any interpreter: and he suggested that on account of the heat at Hurmuz the Fathers at Isfahan and Hurmuz should be interchanged every three years.

In his letter No. 4 to Rome, Fr. Vincent shows that at that period navigation between the Gulf and India, i.e. Goa, ceased after April: "after that month it is impossible to sail to India until September, and they close all the ports there"—i.e. during the SW. monsoon. This letter and that of 16.4.1613 re-introduce to the reader Fr. Antonio de Gouvea, the Augustinian, last mentioned as having been sent in 1608 to Isfahan by the Archbishop-vice-roy to carry a letter of king Philip III to the Shah, and re-dispatched by the latter before May 1609.

On Fr. A. de Gouvea's return journey he had been pressed, against his will, no doubt, into serving the personal interests and private gain of 'Abbas I—"that prince of traders"³—by accompanying to Spain a consignment of 120 bales of silk, which the mercenary Shah hoped would bring him in a substantial profit either in coin or goods. In charge of the consignment went a certain Persian of some standing and trusted by 'Abbas I, whose name is spelt by various Carmelites as 'Danguis Bek', by the Pope as 'Anghes' Baig, which possibly should correctly be 'Jangiz' or 'Tangiz' Baig. Once away from Persia this individual without justification arrogated to himself the title of 'ambassador' (whereas in fact he was a royal salesman and broker) and also abused the trust of his principal and sovereign early in the journey, selling a quantity of silk and using the proceeds for his own amusement or profit, so that, when with Fr. Antonio de Gouvea he eventually reached Madrid,⁴ he had disposed of more than half the 120 bales of silk. The remainder, in none too good condition, he proceeded to offer the king of Spain as a gift and present sent by the Shah. No doubt it was in the nature of a 'white elephant' for the Spanish monarch; but the munificence in actual worth obtained for Jangiz Baig the credence at the court to which genuine ambassadors would have been

¹ O.C.D. 239 b, No. 1.

² Fr. Eusebius ab Omn. Sancti.: "principe de' mercantanti."

³ *Idem*, No. 2 of 3.6.1613.

⁴ This must have been in 1610, seeing that he had left Persia early in 1609 and his stay in Spain overlapped with that of Robert Sherley, who had been in Rome till October 1609 and perhaps later, was in Spain fourteen months and in England before October 1611.

entitled—sufficient at least to put Sir R. Sherley under a cloud: and Jangiz Baig, who, after the Persian code or custom, seems to have expected that the king of Spain would reciprocate handsomely by ordering gifts twice or thrice the valuation of the Persian silk to be handed over to him for his master, was completely disappointed and disillusioned. He received little or nothing, the king of Spain reserving the dispatch of his return presents to whenever his own ambassador from Spain might be nominated. Jangiz Baig did not in person proceed to Rome to deliver the Shah's letter to Pope Paul V, but forwarded it through the Spanish ambassador at the Vatican, as may be seen from the Brief addressed by the Pope to "Anghes Beio, envoy of the king of the Persians", dated 12.9.1611 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 7, p. 46):

"your letter was delivered to Us by the noble Conde de Castro . . . who also delivered
"to Us the letter given you for Us by your illustrious and most puissant king."

Apart from this—whether with any previous knowledge of the Augustinian friar it is not stated, but perhaps thinking thus to keep his companion's mouth shut regarding his own delinquencies in the matter of the silk and elsewhere—Jangiz Baig in his assumed status as 'ambassador' conveyed to king Philip a 'desire' of the Shah for a Catholic bishop to be appointed by Rome for the Armenians in New Julfa, and hinted that 'Abbas I would be gratified by the king obtaining His Holiness' assent to the nomination of Fr. Antonio de Gouvea, whose personality, he represented, was welcome to the Armenians. Whether deceived or not, Philip III did as a matter of fact put pressure on the Pope for Fr. Antonio to be raised to the episcopate, and against his inclination Paul V complied, creating the Portuguese Augustinian titular bishop of Cyrene, together with the office of 'Apostolic Visitor' of the Armenians of Isfahan, by a Brief dated 29.11.1612¹ (? 1611).

As evidence of the request for the creation of Fr. Antonio de Gouvea as bishop coming from king Philip III there is the Brief of 12.9.1611 (Arm. XLV, vol. 7, p. 47) to

"Our very dear son in Christ, Philip the Catholic king of the Spains. . . . The letter
"of the king of the Persians and those communications for Us You had given in Your
"instructions to Your envoy, We have received from Our beloved son, the noble Francisco
"Conde de Castro, Your Majesty's ambassador, who related exactly to Us everything.
"From him, as from Your letter, We have understood how opportune You considered it
"that, since there ought to be sent to Persia some ecclesiastical prelate, We should charge
"with this Our beloved son, Fr. Antonio de Gouvea, of the Order of S. Augustine, which
"was fortified by Your Majesty with so distinguished a testimony to his virtues that We
"had very little hesitation in committing to him such an office. And on that account We
"have created him Bishop of Cyrene, so that with the greater dignity and authority he may
"preside over Divine worship and have thought for the welfare of the Christian faithful:
"and We have granted him the requisite faculties, as We judged to be suitable, according
"to the form in Our letter to him issued about this matter, trusting especially that it will
"happen that the assistance, favour and protection of Your Majesty will ever accompany
"him, which We ardently desire for the glory of God and the increase of the Christian
"Faith. But other matters which We consider necessary for the whole Persian business
"and to preserve the goodwill of that king Your ambassador, with whom We have treated
"in detail about them, will punctually notify You."

The new Bishop did not proceed to Rome to take his instructions, for on the same day also Pope Paul V wrote to him (Arm. XLV, vol. 7, p. 47), beginning:

¹ See among the Latin Briefs in the appendix to this work a copy of the instructions of Pope Paul V for exemption of the Carmelites in Persia from the authority given to the Bishop of Cyrene. According to the *Bullarum* of the Carmelite Order, vol. III, pp. 428-9, from which the copy was taken, the date thereof is 29.11.1612. But perhaps this is an error for 29.11.1611; because the bishop had reached Hurmuz already before 16.4.1613, and that appears too short an interval after November 1612 for him to have made the long voyages from Lisbon to Goa, and Goa to Hurmuz. Moreover, the Pope's Brief to Shah 'Abbas alluding to Fr. Antonio having been created a bishop is dated 12.9.1611.

"We have received your letter, but would have more willingly had speech with you, if you had been able to come to Us. Although you have written carefully and to the point to Us, and many matters also Our beloved son the noble Francisco Conde de Castro reported to Us in your name, We should have been disposed to question you perhaps about not a few things. For fatherly love keeps Us anxious about the well-being of Our sons, who inhabit Persia, and about preserving the goodwill of the most puissant king of the Persians, when We have received so many and so clear indications of his kindness to the Christian faithful. For these reasons, for all the brevity of this letter of Ours . . . or the less We enjoin many things on You, that you work to procure the well-being of the souls there . . . and to preserve the friendship of the king, so much the more you should convince yourself We wish to give it you in charge to attend to both these points with all watchfulness and care. . . . Trusting in your dutifulness, prudence and tact We ask nothing specially of you . . . as We desire that you will study how to strengthen and increase the goodwill of the king of the Persians for Us by whatever services You can render in the Lord. . . . For We greatly regret that the ability to gratify His Highness in all the things he has requested of Us hitherto has not come up to Our desire, and this We wish you to explain carefully to him. . . ."

How ill Pope Paul with his anxiety to preserve excellent relations with 'Abbas I was served in the matter of prudence and tact by this nominee of the king of Spain will be read in the sequel.

Before the delinquent Jangiz Baig himself late in 1612 or early in 1613 reached Hurmuz in advance of the new bishop and sanguine that he would be able to give a plausible explanation of his not bringing back the value of the silk, tales of the proceedings of Jangiz Baig had reached the ears of the Shah. As soon as he went on his knees to kiss the Shah's foot the latter gave him a kick and made a sign that he should be punished as had been indicated in advance—i.e. first his tongue was cut out, his lips and ears and nostrils amputated: then, after the miserable being had been exposed to the public gaze in agony for two days, he was disembowelled.

Pope Paul V's letter of 12.9.1611 (Arch. Sec. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 7, p. 53, formerly 44) is to the point and illuminative and is here given in translation—evidently 'Abbas I had written to him by Jangiz Baig and Fr. de Gouvea in 1609.

"Pope Paul V to the illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas king of the Persians. Illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas, king of the Persians, greeting and the light of Divine grace. We have received a most pleasing letter given Your ambassador, the brave and honoured Anghes [*sic*] Baig, by Your Highness for Us which has been delivered to Us by Our beloved son, the noble Count Francisco de Castro, who is the ambassador to Us and this holy Apostolic See from Our most beloved son in Christ, Philip the most puissant king of the Spains. For Your ambassador had been ill in Spain and since, the time of his return to You in Persia being at hand (as he himself wrote Us), he followed the advice of the king of the Spains, of whose love and kindness towards Your Highness he had had proof, and handed over all the business to the king's ambassador at Rome, who with the utmost faithfulness and care has laid before Us all You had given Your ambassador in commissions for Us, We greatly grieve that We could not give him in Our presence tokens of Our very affectionate goodwill towards You. It was for the same reason that Our venerable Brother Antonio, Bishop of Cyrene, also did not come to Us, whose letter written by himself to Us did indeed make Us especially long to see him and to talk with him. In it he particularly extolled Your Highness' courteousness, kindness and goodwill towards Our beloved sons the faithful who dwell in Your widespread dominions, but especially towards himself and his companions the Brothers of the Order of the holy Father Augustine. Without ambiguity We freely own that We are to the very greatest degree in Your debt, most brave and eminent king, for that You treat Our subjects so kindly and lovingly and that, as We know from Your letter, You are ready

“and disposed to give them daily more manifest proofs of Your goodwill. You have indeed “by these favours and this inclination of Your mind towards the faithful bound Our love “so fast to You that We are ever mindful of You in Our prayers and constantly pray the “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that He enlighten Your understanding with “the light of the Holy Spirit and guide Your steps into the way of salvation so that through “His unspeakable mercy You may deserve to receive the reward which We desire for You “with all the love of Our heart. So too also by Our constant prayers We ask of His bound- “less goodness that by the power of his boundless strength, whereby He is wont to shatter “the bows and to shiver the arms of the proud, He may aid Your conquering arms against “the ceaseless enemy of the Christian name, the most hostile Ottoman tyrant, and that “He may hurl that very creature beneath Your feet to the glory of His Divine name, and “that He may bring to naught his unendurable tyranny. O that, as We have united “these prayers of Ours, which We have never broken off, so too We might have been “able to unite together at the same time the mighty forces of Our very dear sons in Christ, “the kings and princes of the Christian commonwealth, just as from the start of Our “Pontificate We have right up to this day assiduously and zealously laboured, even as We “have intimated not once nor twice to Your Highness that We should, as soon soever as “We had taken over the ministry of Our apostolate.

“But the Divine Providence, undeceivable in its governance, disposing otherwise, “hindrances have come to light so many and so complex as to hamper not merely Our “own endeavours and exertions to effect this joining of arms, but to force Us to endeavour “to unite minds in friendship and to heal the differences which have been stirred up among “Our subjects too rudely and too seriously, especially in Germany. We Ourselves too in “Italy have not been without or free from suspecting disturbances in Italy, all of which “We believe Your ambassadors, ‘Ali Baig the Persian and Our well-beloved son Robert “Sherley the Englishman have by now reported to Your Highness, and We think they “have already betaken themselves to You. For these men could have independently known “all such, since each, though not at the same time in the City, has mostly been present “during all that was going on in Italy, and saw Our disquiet about the state of affairs in “Germany. But the aforesaid Anghes [*sic*] Baig also will now be equally able to report “to You that very matter, as he, We think, undoubtedly will have heard of and understood “the dissensions and quarrels of Our subjects in Germany, while he stayed at the Court “of the king of the Spains.

“Consequently, knowing as We do Your outstanding kindness and circumspectness, “We trust You will rather pity Our dejection than complain of Our slackness in urging “and setting on fire Our most beloved sons the Christian princes for a Turkish war. For “nohow can You doubt Our will, particularly since there has been added to Our innate “longings the chance supplied Us by Your wonderful courage and bravery, and also happy “fortune in war, of destroying this tyranny hated of God and man.

“Wherefore also We strongly desire that Your Highness be quite convinced that, if God “kindly grant Our prayers by giving harmony and peace to the Christian commonwealth, “We shall never rest idle, We shall never fold Our hands until helped by the Divine grace “We stir up Christian arms against the Turks.

“Now, as touching the remaining matters, We are just as much desirous as You not “merely to keep up, but to increase our mutual friendship and goodwill, and of this We “shall be zealously solicitous with every kind of good office, regard and affection. So, “since We should have sent in compliance with Your request some prelate of the Church “to Persia to busy himself with what is useful for the faithful sojourning there and at one “and the same time to manifest to You Our special regard, We have chosen for this Our “venerable brother Antonio de Gouvea and made him Bishop of Cyrene, because We “thought he would be admirably suited to this office and very welcome to You: and We “wish You to show him unhesitating confidence regarding all he will lay before You as to “Our outstanding goodwill towards You.

"With regard to the transaction which You wish to be done by merchants with Your subjects We shall be careful to take action with Our dearest son in Christ Philip their king, who, We know, has a very great regard for You: and We trust he will oblige You willingly in all possible details. We beg God Almighty with all the love of Our heart, to grant Your Highness true and utter happiness and to open the way leading to the life that His only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ by His own death gained for the human race by the shedding of His most precious blood.

"Given at Rome at S. Peter's under the Fisherman's ring the day before the Ides of September 1611 (=12.9.1611) in the seventh year of Our Pontificate."

Somewhere about March 1613 the Bishop of Cyrene (Mgr de Gouvea) must have reached Hurmuz: there is this mention of him in letters of Fr. Vincent:¹

"16.4.1613 to Fr. Benignus, Isfahan. The Bishop of Cyrene, Fra. Antonio, will *leave here within a month*. Immediately after his arrival in his presence Don Jorge" (governor of Hurmuz) "summoned to a council all the officials of his Majesty" (the king of Spain and Portugal) "and the Religious: and Fr. Leander and I were also there: and he proposed to remove the 'curusi'² on the Persians and Catholic Armenians: and it was decided in the affirmative. As to how to recognize the latter the Bishop says that they will be those who carry his certificate to be such, and in his absence or of his death the certificate of the prior of the Augustinians at Isfahan. But Don Jorge said that in that respect he would do as he liked, because the provision made by his Majesty" (i.e. the king of Spain) "applies indiscriminately to the Armenian subjects of the Shah of Persia. The Bishop bears from His Holiness the title of 'Visitor of the Armenians of Persia'. . . . On the first day that I went to visit him, in the presence of the Captain Don Jorge and of the 'vicar' (i.e. forane of Hurmuz) "he told me that His Holiness had inserted in the Brief regarding him that he had nothing to do with us" (i.e. the Carmelites).³ "I answered him that His Holiness had done this because he knew very well that, even without his writing so, it was for us to show that we are his" (the Bishop's) "servants by deeds and words. He shows much good will towards us and we respond in like fashion. He is very affable and your Reverence should use many nice words and compliments to him. . . . Should his lordship try to make some innovation as regards the Syrians, who are under our superintendence and order them to place themselves under the Augustinian Fathers, your Reverence should not agree to it . . . because he has not the power to do this, not being their prelate, but only their visitor. . . . Since we are exempt from his visitation, so too will be the Christians in our charge. . . . Finally, everything can be arranged tactfully."

3.6.1613. "The Bishop of Cyrene, that Augustinian Father who used to be in Persia, was awaited here by his Fathers very eagerly, for they hoped that he would bring them some measure from His Holiness directed against us: and, although I believe that he attempted to obtain this in Madrid, they did not listen to him and so their designs are frustrated. . . . He came to our oratory several times and once conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation. . . . He has already left for Persia."

In his 'Report' already cited⁴ Fr. Redempt of the Cross mentions:

"From Hurmuz the Bishop of Cyrene wrote that he had been appointed Bishop of Cyrene and Visitor of the Armenian Church. This caused great alarm and fright among

¹ O.C.D. 239 b.

² The word used in the Italian original. But evidently some Persian word is intended, perhaps *khuruj* (*kharraj*) in the sense of a tax, exit tax.

³ For Latin text of the instructions, dated 29.11.1612, see Appendix of Latin Briefs: it is copied from the *Bullarium* of the Carmelites, vol. III, p. 428.

⁴ Quoted by Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus in *En Persia*, vol. II, p. 93.

"all the Armenians, who went about as if terrified, anticipating some serious hurt and displaying great disgust at it in the presence of the Shah and strong opposition, so that he should not become suspicious, as on a former occasion, and think that this was their doing. "Over this new title" (i.e. 'Visitor of the Armenian Church') "the Shah too began on the "one hand to be annoyed, and on the other to mock because he considered the business "of the silk and the rest to have been so badly managed. . . . Finally, when he (the Bishop) "had arrived at Isfahan, they gave him an honourable reception, the Shah dissimulating "and showing him a smiling face and paying him many compliments. But afterwards, "when the Bishop presented to the Shah what he was bringing from his Catholic Majesty, "the Shah asked 'which was the value of the silk, and which the "saughat"—a Persian "word for 'present' or 'souvenir'—from the king of Spain. The Bishop answered that the "'saughat' consisted of some pieces of gold and very curious things with stones of great "value: while the value of the silk was represented by all those spices he had brought from "India, i.e. a large quantity of pepper and cinnamon, etc.

"The Shah then had calculations made as to how much all those spices would be worth, "and they reckoned it at very little, but, even if taken at a wide margin, in Persia they "could not be worth 15,000 ducats: and, when the pieces of gold and those spices are added "together against the value of the silk, they say it would not reach half the value of the "silk; because at a minimum each load of silk delivered from Persia in Aleppo is worth "1,000 ducats, and therefore in Spain would be worth something more. And nobody "blamed his Catholic Majesty for sending so small compensation in return for so much "silk, seeing that he was sending double and more (the value) of what actually reached his "hands. The blame lay with him who had deceived his Catholic Majesty. . . .

"... Afterwards, when the Shah saw himself so cheated, he sent to tell the Bishop that "his lordship had to pay for all the silk, as well as the interest" (on its value) "for the past "years because that silk belonged to a mosque of his, to which he had assigned this deal "in order to bring it in some profit. In defence the Bishop asserted that the silk was nothing "but a present. When the Shah learnt this, he took it very ill and compelled the Bishop "to write to his Majesty the king of Spain about this, jointly with an Augustinian Father. "When" (in his turn) "the king of Spain had this brought to his notice, he was greatly "annoyed with the Bishop, because the latter had not reported to him that the silk was "for sale; and he sent out instructions making clear his great displeasure with the Bishop, "but these arrived when the Bishop had already left Persia. . . ."

Incident followed on incident. The Carmelite historian, Fr. Eusebius—on the authority of one of the Fathers in Persia, unnamed by him¹—relates that one day, while the Bishop of Cyrene was out walking with the Carmelites, they happened to pass a building where the Shah was 'inducting' a new head of the 'Sufi' order of darwishes: noticing them, the Shah had them called inside and was especially gracious to the Bishop. The hour being late 'Abbas I ordered the repast to be brought and made the ecclesiastics sit on one side of him, the new superior of the darwish confraternity on the other. Ignorant possibly of the etiquette of the country, Mgr de Gouvea committed indiscretions, firstly, in causing some of his own people to sit at the same 'table'² which the Shah took as a slight, although he said nothing at the time. At the end of the meal gifts to the new superior were made—the Shah the equivalent of 1,000 scudi, the representatives of the city, the grandees proportionately, and last came ten or twelve Armenians of Julfa with a valuable donation in the name of their community, whereupon the Bishop, turning to 'Abbas I, was so tactless as to express his satisfaction at seeing *his* subjects, assigned to him by the Pope, contribute to the satisfaction of his Majesty. In vain an attempt was made to steer the conversation into more prudent channels: feigning to be greatly pleased, 'Abbas I led on Mgr de Gouvea to expatiate on *his* jurisdiction, while

¹ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, part II, 3rd book, chap. IV.

² This word *tavola* in Italian is hardly likely to have been the wooden object we know by the name, but presumably is used to equal *sufreh*, the Persian cloth spread on the ground.

the Armenians present, showing on their faces how disturbed they were, returned home in much perturbation. After their departure the Bishop of Cyrene proceeded to ask for a house to be near *his* Armenians, a request no sooner uttered than granted: and for a quantity of wine, which was sent to him that night. Mgr de Gouvea went off with the Carmelites, full of satisfaction at the courtesy shown him; but the Carmelite Superior (then Fr. Redempt), knowing something of the nature of the despot—how proud, suspicious and annoyed—remarked:

“Your lordship is consoled by this; but I feel, as it were, a knife in my heart. Tomorrow “morning you will see the effects of the favours of this evening.”

The apprehension was correctly founded: 'Abbas I took the course of intimidating the Armenians against any dalliance with the movement for closer relations with Rome, which some of their chief ecclesiastics particularly desired. The next day a royal decree was promulgated prohibiting any Armenians, under pain of grave penalties, from visiting the houses of the European Religious, while at the same time ordering them to satisfy and pay up a debt contracted with the Shah's exchequer five years previously. For after he had transplanted the bulk of the Armenians from Greater Armenia (i.e. after 1604), in order that they should not die of starvation 'Abbas I had lent and advanced them at their request 4,000 Tumans to be repaid within three years: a condition attached was that, if the capital were not repaid by then, for every three Tumans they were to give and surrender to him one Armenian boy, for every two Tumans a girl. According to the position of the families participating in this advance the sum had been made over to them partly in silk, partly in coin: and their dire straits blinded them to the barbarous penalty hanging over them in case of delay in repayment, the certainty of exposing their sons to loss of their Christianity and their girls to shame as well. As time went on the Armenians had taken the Shah's silence as a sign that he had forgiven and waived the debt.

This decree threw the Armenians into indescribable consternation: many of the families were without their heads who had at the time gone off trading elsewhere: others had saved no money. They appealed to the Bishop of Cyrene and the Carmelites, explaining that apostasy would be their only remedy, unless the European Religious came to their help. Mgr de Gouvea contributed 1,000 ducats, the Carmelites 400 gold reals: with the money got together by the principal Armenians several thousand Tumans were collected and taken to the Wazir. But that part of the money subscribed by the missionaries was sent back with the sarcastic comment that the Shah was astonished that once more Mgr de Gouvea should have made so bold as to meddle in the sovereign's dealings with his own vassals. Notwithstanding exhortations by the Carmelite and Augustinian Fathers to the Armenians to keep their faith, 300 households apostatized, the apostates being released from their debts and given money besides: later they repented and went to the European Religious, who hesitated to reconcile them, fearing a second lapse. As to those Armenians who did not declare their readiness to conform to Islam, the Shah's myrmidons, not satisfied with money offered, tore away their children, “as if it had been during the persecution of Herod”, remarked the chronicler. A conference of the Religious and principal Armenians was held to consider how they could deal with the situation without causing the Shah still more annoyance, while doing their utmost at the time, or later, for those Armenians likely to apostatize, or who had apostatized.

The Carmelite superior, Fr. Redempt, ransomed through the priest Bagdasar twelve young people belonging to Uniat families for 150 scudi, but had not the funds to intervene on behalf of the schismatics.¹

¹ There exists a slightly varied account of the outcome and issue of the persecution in O.C.D. 236 b, a ‘Report’ “by Khwajeh Virdi, an Armenian of Julfa regarding the persecution perpetrated by the king of Persia on the “Armenians in the year 1613, in the month of October.

“In the year 1613, and month of October, when the Shah made Muslims of the Christians who were owing him a “certain sum of money which he had lent them, he gave orders that all the Armenians in the city of Isfahan must on “the day following make profession of the creed of Muhammad, and even those who did not owe money, nor had received

On 2.10.1613 the Bishop of Cyrene and the European Religious met to debate whether they should not abandon the country.¹ They reflected that the continuance of their presence in Isfahan might be actually harmful to the Armenians, since under fresh pretexts the Shah might think that by molesting them he would bring pressure on the Pope, while not advancing the union with the Holy See desired. So they decided each to record his opinion,² but to take no action until they had informed the representatives of their Orders at Hurmuz and those of the king of Spain there, so that his Majesty and the Pope should be informed of the position. Mgr de Gouvea had, however, perceived the Shah's dislike for him, and in his own mind determined to quit the country without asking for the Shah's permit or assent: it is averred (in MSS. *Hist. Miss.*) that he produced an alleged letter from the Proveditor at Hurmuz to the effect that, as ambassador of the king of Spain, Don Garcia de Silva had already arrived at Masqat, on which account the Bishop wanted to have sent at once a large number of camels for the transport of the gifts from king Philip III for 'Abbas I, for which a detailed order from the Shah would be needed. The Carmelites took to the Shah a list of requirements for the reception of the ambassador, as furnished by the Bishop, and, seemingly gratified at the prospect of receiving an embassy of rank and circumstance, 'Abbas I gave orders for everything to be got ready. But Mgr de Gouvea made another blunder by allowing to fall into the hands of the Shah some writing he had obtained from Hurmuz to confirm his statement (already noted) that the silk had been sent as a gift to the king of Spain. 'Abbas I is said to have flown into a temper and to have had the Bishop told that he himself and his officials would take charge of the arrangements for the arrival of the ambassador: only for the Bishop of Cyrene to commit a further indiscretion by sending a message to the effect that, since his presence was no longer required at Isfahan, he was going to meet the ambassador of his sovereign, as was right and proper. Angered at such persistent argumentativeness the autocrat is recorded to have curtly replied: 'Jahannum bi-rawad' ('He can go to hell!'). This Mgr de Gouvea chose to consider licence to depart and, as soon as the Shah went off northwards to Georgia, summoned the Religious of his own Order and the Carmelites and apprised them of his intention. In vain they tried to dissuade him from such an unwise course. Knowing such early arrival of the ambassador from Spain to be a figment of his own imagination, a misunderstanding or plain fiction in order to furnish a pretext for his escape from the embarrassing situation in Persia, which would be discovered before long were he to remain, Mgr de Gouvea departed, 21.10.1613,³ from Isfahan with a large party and many carriages, in one a comfortable seat being arranged for the imaginary ambassador. (Actually

"any, merely out of hatred for our holy faith, and for the propagation of his own false religion. That same night there came on the Shah a fit, accompanied by rigors of his whole body, and stenocardia and pain in his heart, so that it appeared that he was about to enter the death agony. On the morrow he changed his mind and sent 30,000 gold sequins to Julfa for them to be distributed, saying that the money of the Christians had been well earned and that he wanted to make a gift of it as alms, as it seemed to him that alms from the money of Muslims is not acceptable to Allah: and he gave orders that these Christians who did not owe him money should be allowed to continue to live in the Christian Faith." (The symptoms described resemble those in a false, or true, angina pectoris.)

¹ The account in *En Persia*, vol. III, pp. 100-1, gives reasons which read intelligibly, viz.:

"The Shah had signed peace with the Turks and so no longer required assistance from the princes of Christendom for the prosecution of that war, nor had he been able to find through their intermediary a sale and outlet for his silk trade, and so on his side 'Abbas I was in no mood to implement his half promises about the building of churches and protection of the Christian religion. The mere sight of the Religious irritated him against Pope and Christian princes: and he was already scheming to attack Hurmuz and make war on the Portuguese. Moreover, shortly before—between August and October—a tragedy had occurred at the Persian court, which was to render the mind of 'Abbas I still more unbalanced and, with conspiracy and treachery feared, his moods dangerous. The Bishop was convinced that he himself already was in danger because of the Shah's insistence on payment for the silk, and that he himself ought to be the first to get away to Hurmuz. The Religious on the other hand wanted to arrange departure without creating an incident, or arousing suspicion of concerted flight. It was then that the Bishop, feeling himself in disgrace, commissioned the Carmelites to announce to 'Abbas I the coming of an ambassador of high rank from Spain, and they took the opportunity to ask the Shah for passports for the Bishop, the Augustinian Fathers, on the ground that their position as representatives of the king of Spain would cease with the ambassador's arrival. But the Shah paid no heed to the request for the passports."

² A copy of the document signed by the Bishop of Cyrene, Fr. Redeimpt and Fr. Bartholemew Mary of S. Francis for the Carmelites, Fr. Bernard de Azevedo and Melchior of S. Anne for the Portuguese Augustinians is to be found in O.C.D. 236 a.

³ Not 21.10.1614, as in *En Persia*.

Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa was nominated ambassador in Madrid, 9.8.1613, i.e. two months only before Mgr de Gouvea at Isfahan was announcing his arrival at Masqat: and he set sail from Lisbon with the galleons in March 1614, not arriving in Persia till 1618.¹

As the step taken by Mgr de Gouvea was misunderstood in Spain and Rome as well as by Christians in Persia the following declaration left on record² by the Superior of the Portuguese Augustinians, i.e. of his own Order and race, at Isfahan may be quoted as evidence that the Bishop acted wilfully and against the counsel of the resident Religious:

"I, Fra. Bernardo de Azevedo, bear witness that, when the lord Bishop of Cyrene was "discussing with the Discalced Carmelite Fathers and with us of S. Augustine and telling "us the reasons for which he was determined to leave the capital of the Shah, we replied "to the lord Bishop that it would be more prudent to be slow in coming to a decision, "and to acquaint first the Captain of Hurmuz and our Religious there with what we had "resolved to do in respect of this business, and to await their reply and views, in order to "be guided by these. But the Bishop deemed it a sounder plan for himself to go in advance "to Hurmuz, leaving us here to await his decision, and he repeated that we should not "leave until we received it. Isfahan, 28th October, 1613."

The officials of the Shah in Isfahan did not stop the departure of the Bishop, for they were too preoccupied with meeting the requirements of the coming ambassador: and he was well received at Shiraz by the governor; but the latter had orders not to allow him to leave the kingdom³ and wrote to the king's officer at Lar to detain him until further notice: the Bishop was not allowed to communicate with the Religious at Isfahan, where mordant rumours circulated. After some time Imam Quli Khan from Shiraz solicited orders from his Majesty regarding the *détenu* and, on receiving an ambiguous reply, allowed him to continue on his way to Hurmuz. (That is the account told in *Hist. Miss.* and *En Persia*, quoting Fr. Redempt.)

Considering that he left Isfahan towards the end of October and was in Hurmuz two months later, such detention could not have been lengthy, for:

"On Christmas day 1613 there reached Hurmuz Fr. Antonio de Gouvea, Bishop of "Cyrene, returning from Persia: he gave the news that Fr. Bartholomew Mary had gone "off to Rome, and that Fr. Redempt would be coming immediately to Hurmuz with all "the house" (i.e. convent at Isfahan). "Fr. Redempt had written to Fr. Vincent asking "his opinion" (i.e. about the suggested withdrawal) "but none of his letters arrived, being "seized *en route*."⁴

The Portuguese Augustinian Fathers evacuated Isfahan, 19.10.1613, and made their way to Baghdad—fortunately for them, as Shah and Court were incensed when they found to be a myth the immediate arrival of a special ambassador from Spain.

Of the Carmelites, before those untoward events Fr. Benignus had already left via Aleppo for Rome, 4.8.1613, in order to be present at the Chapter General in the spring of 1614: the Shah had sent by him letters for the king of Poland and the Emperor Matthias⁵ and a handsome *bezoar*⁶—stone as a gift for the Pope. He did not return to the Mission. Fr. Bartholomew Mary of S. Francis also quitted Persia between October and December of this year for reasons of health, and to inform the Pope and their superiors of developments since the departure

¹ See *En Persia*, vol. III, p. 100, quoting Fr. Benignus, who on reaching Italy at the end of 1613 had been sent to Spain and, while there, learnt the news: and also 'Don Luis Cabrera de Cordoba: "Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa . . . va para embajador con los galeones que han de partir para la India este mes de Marzo 1614."

² See Fr. Eusebius ab Omn. Sanct., MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, part II, book 3, chap. IV, in O.C.D.

³ "Because he had no passports," says *En Persia*.

⁴ Letter of Fr. Leander, undated, but of 1615, in O.C.D. 236 a.

⁵ The Carmelite archives in Rome have the replies by these sovereigns, apparently undelivered, magnificent by their seals and the calligraphy.

⁶ *Pa-zahr* in Persian, considered efficacious for snake poison, a calculus taken from the stomach of wild goats. In his Brief of 16.7.1620 Pope Paul V acknowledged receipt of this stone and the letters of the Shah brought by Fr. Benignus.

of Fr. Benignus, including their plan to abandon Isfahan; while the Superior, Fr. Redempt, having succeeded in obtaining a passport for himself from the Wazir and left Lay Brother Diego to mind the convent at Isfahan, was on his way south to Hurmuz early in 1614 when Fr. Leander, who had set out from Hurmuz to relieve him, met him on the road with instructions to return and reopen the convent: this was after a council of the king's officers at Hurmuz, the Bishop of Cyrene and the Religious of both Orders had decided that in no wise should the convents at Isfahan be abandoned.

Here had better be interpolated a brief mention of the visit paid about May 1613 by Fr. Redempt, the then Superior at Isfahan, and Fr. Bartholomew Mary to the Katholikos, or patriarch, of the schismatic Armenians at Echmiadzin near Erivan—the place so frequently mentioned in Shah 'Abbas' negotiations with Rome—in order to deliver a Brief which Pope Paul V had written in reply to representations by the Armenians of their trials in the years immediately preceding. They had asked for the dispatch of a Papal representative. This particular Katholikos,¹ Melchisadech (=Malik Sadiq), then aged about 55, broken in health, but esteemed for his charity and generosity, was genuinely anxious for doctrinal unity with Rome, and after a solemn reception of the Carmelites in his cathedral, accompanied by his bishops and his clergy, he allowed Fr. Redempt to address the Armenian populace and explain the great interest of the Holy See in the Armenian Church and its misfortunes, the ardent desire of the Pope to see them reunited in communion with the Chair of Peter. Pope Paul V's letter with its exposition of the main tenets of Catholic Faith was read: and then the patriarch, bishops and vartapets retired for a time to discuss points in dispute, which the Katholikos endeavoured to smooth out as far as he could. When they returned to the church it was for him to assure the people that all the articles of belief enumerated in the Brief were acceptable except for (a) the anathematizing of Dioscurus and (b) abandonment of their own rites, uses and customs to follow the Latin rite as claimed by Popes in the past. The point over rites would not present difficulties, Fr. Redempt promised them; and he expounded to the assembly the arguments at the Council of Chalcedon against Dioscurus so convincingly, it would appear from the account recorded by him, that the Katholikos Melchisadech, standing at his throne, pronounced the words: "If it be thus, I swear obedience and submission to the Chair of S. Peter, following the example of our glorious apostle S. Gregory."

This was the first of a number of negotiations between the schismatic Armenians and the Carmelites, spread over the rest of the century, none of which produced any lasting effect, or made union an accomplished fact: in due course the important history of the Armenian Church and its dissensions will form the subject of further pages in this work; but it may be mentioned that shortly after this visit the Katholikos Melchisadech was deposed as the result of intrigue, and David did not continue the negotiations.

After that these two Fathers went on to visit the 'Frank' Armenians centred round Nakhchiwan, i.e. the Uniats under the charge of Dominican convents and a long succession

¹ It is strange that the report of Fr. Redempt refers to Melchisadech as "patriarch or Katholikos," for in the list of the primates at Echmiadzin given in *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, vol. IV, 1930, Paris, he is specified as

"coadjutor from 1593 to 1628 during the reign of David IV (1587-1629). At the time of the occupation by Shah 'Abbas "of Echmiadzin and its district the Katholikos David and his coadjutor, Melchisadech, had turned to the Shah. . . . "The Katholikos David, an ignorant priest without prestige, was half converted by the Augustinians; and wrote to "Pope Paul V that he recognized his superior authority and the infallibility of the Catholic Church. Along with 6 "bishops, 109 priests and numerous deacons he also solemnly pronounced a profession of Catholic Faith, 12.5.1607, "but, as opponents accused him of putting himself under the domination of Latin princes, he declared that his sub- "mission to the Pope was made dependent on the approval by Rome of all Armenian uses." (Rouen trans. of 1646 p. 379, from Fr. A. de Gouvea's book, Lisbon, 1611.)

"3. . . . Melchisadech was as ambitious as, but more clever than David. Both sought to win the favour of Shah "Abbas I and to supplant one another. Denounced by David, his coadjutor was thrown into prison, and compelled "by the executioners to swallow morsels of his own flesh. These misfortunes decided him to turn to the Pope. He had "a profession of faith sent to Pope Paul V (15.5.1610), which was more precise than that of David. Three years later he "declared himself quite ready to conform to the dogmas and rites of the Roman Church, because there ought to be only "a single flock and a single shepherd (*Azarian*, pp. 202-20; *Chronicles of Stephen the Pole, 1617-1630*). Union with the Roman "Church did not secure David's coadjutor from his pitiless creditors. He fled to Constantinople; but, after having held "the patriarchate there for a year he was sent away. Finally, with the sanction of 'Abbas I, he decided to make over to "his nephew, Isaac, his titles and his debts, and to take refuge in Lemberg. . . ."

of Dominican archbishops. When he had retaken Greater Armenia from the Turks (1604), 'Abbas I had given the government of this district to a certain Maqsud, who had taxed them extortionately. They appealed to the Carmelite superior to intercede with the Shah, and accordingly he went to that monarch, then at Tabriz (this was about July 1613), asking for the reduction of the taxes, and a change of governor.¹ At the audience 'Abbas I granted the request and by his orders his Wazir issued a 'farman' of appointment of a new governor, to the satisfaction of those Armenians. While at Tabriz also Fr. Redempt had urged on the Shah a renewed effort for the release of Fr. John Thaddeus from his detention in Astrakhan. The Shah's threats to the Ruthenians, the protection given by the Grand Duchess have been already mentioned; but it was Pentecost 1614 before the sorely tried Fr. John Thaddeus, in an emaciated state, had reached Isfahan. From Tabriz, too, Fr. Redempt and Bartholomew Mary drew up, signed and dispatched to Rome a report on their proceedings among the Armenians.²

In the narrative about the Bishop of Cyrene—which, however inconsequent and trivial it may seem, like that about the Syrian Arab Fathullah (Michel Coray), is related here because of the political importance they had in the chain of events that led up to the attack on Hurmuz and loss of the Portuguese possessions in the Persian Gulf—it has been noted that in September or early October 1613, 'Abbas I was setting off on a military operation in Georgia tributary to him. A rebellion or conspiracy had occurred, in which the Georgian princes Taimuraz and Lukhrasp were concerned: machinations by a Turkish ambassador are said to have been the cause of the Shah summoning them and so starting the revolt: Georgia was looted by the Persian militia, which, however, is said to have lost 18,000—doubtless a numerical exaggeration—owing to floods in the main. The sons of the princes were emasculated and sent as prisoners to Shiraz with their mothers. Connected with this development in some way appears to have been the tragic murder of Safi Mirza, eldest son of 'Abbas I, who, jealous of the popularity of this son of a Georgian mother, had him put to death by a slave. Because of the amiability of his nature, his goodwill towards Christians, much had been hoped by the Religious of this prince. Remorse for this evil deed added to the other habits of 'Abbas I a fear of assassination, so that he would not sleep in the same bed twice in succession, and would have a number of others to remain with him in the room.

The departure of Mgr Antonio de Gouvea, and the manner of it had repercussions, bringing to a head Perso-Portuguese relations. 'Abbas I, absent in the north, is stated to have been doubly mortified—once because he had been duped by the false announcement of the arrival of the special ambassador from Spain, and, secondly, because his officials had allowed the Bishop to get away to Hurmuz, the price of the silk still unpaid. The Daruga of Isfahan feared lest on him should fall his master's wrath, for he had been one of those recommending the dispatch of the bales of silk to Madrid: so, against the Shah's return from Georgia, he busied himself in getting together the value of the silk and, with the idea of reimbursing himself in part from a seizure of the contents of the convent of the absent Augustinians, kept pressing the Carmelites to hand over to him the key, while they declined to deliver it.

On the other hand, Imam Quli Khan, who had succeeded his father, Allah Virdi Khan, as governor-general or viceroy in the South—"Khan of Shiraz", as he is usually termed in these contemporary narratives—considering himself discredited with his sovereign more than anyone else for having allowed Mgr de Gouvea to leave Lar for Hurmuz, begged the Shah for permission to make the oft-projected attack on the Portuguese fort at Gāmburun.³ Appre-

¹ In the appendix of Latin Briefs will be found (No. 13) one of 31.8.1614 in which Pope Paul V, by the hands of Fr. Cittadini (afterwards archbishop) and others begged Shah 'Abbas I to order his officials to deal more humanely with the Christians of the Nakhchiwan district and elsewhere. It is not translated here: see appendix of Latin Briefs, and Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 8, p. 60.

² See the *Relación* of Fr. Redempt, chap. XX, in O.C.D. 234.

³ This place on the mainland, adjoining the site of the modern Bandar 'Abbas, is given varying derivations by Persian literary writers: the learned Mirza Hairat spelt it as above transliterated گامبرون. The long-drawn *alif* 'Gaumbrun' sounded to Europeans of that age like 'Combroon'. It is thought to be a compound of 'gaum' or 'gam', a pace or step: and 'burun' = outside.

hending that it might turn to his disadvantage to break entirely with the king of Spain and Portugal, 'Abbas I at first replied in the negative. But at that juncture there arrived at Hurmuz a new Captain, Don Luis de Gama. From olden time, i.e. early 1500's, there had been a prohibition by the king of Portugal against any Muslim or Gentile sailing the straits without a written licence from the Captain of Hurmuz, on pain of death; but, because of the damage this measure would do to the Treasury of the possession, and also because of the complications it would have introduced into relations with the Persian mainland (seeing that those infringing the regulation were subjects of the Shah) it had not been observed. Imperfectly acquainted with the reasons for allowing the *status quo* to continue, and punctilious by character, Don Luis de Gama had over 60 men put to the sword early in 1614 on altercations arising over non-possession of the licence by the crews of some barques loaded with grain belonging to traders from the coastal village of Nakhilu, subject to the jurisdiction of the Khan of Shiraz. This tactless, as well as cruel, act produced exasperation in Persia: and there were other incidents that rankled, one concerning a Persian envoy to India who had been maltreated.

So the Khan of Shiraz again pressed 'Abbas I for sanction to attack and received a guarded reply to the effect that he might do so, but would pay for it with his head, should the event turn out unfortunate and unsuccessful. Nothing daunted, Imam Quli Khan then sent a herald to the Captain of Hurmuz, declaring war on account of the above injuries and also extortionate dues levied from Persians, and demanding, too, the surrender of the Syrian Fathullah (Michelangelo Coray): he made preparations for his campaign throughout the month of June (1614), calculating that by the end of it the Persian traders usually resident in Hurmuz would have got away to avoid the summer heat and be safe from reprisals. He collected altogether some 12,000 men on land, 4 ships with 300 *terrada* capable of carrying 30 men each, and at the fall of August (1614) began to move, first occupying the island of Qishm, whence Hurmuz drew its water supply. All the other islands were emptied of their inhabitants: and the Portuguese fort at Gāmbnun besieged. But, notwithstanding its weak fortifications, for four months and after various assaults the Persian forces failed to take it. Hearing of the obstinate defence Shah 'Abbas sent orders to Imam Quli Khan, who had his headquarters at Lar, to retire his troops and treat for peace. Thrice the Captain of Hurmuz had tried to relieve the garrison, on the second occasion a ship taking fire with the munitions it carried, while the other vessels were driven back by the wind (it will be recalled that a large part of the siege took place during the monsoon season, when sailing communications between Hurmuz and Goa were normally suspended). By the time the third flotilla from Hurmuz had set out the fortress had already (23.12.1614) made an honourable capitulation, i.e. the 25 [? *sic*—250] survivors of the garrison. But it is asserted that the Persians had lost 4,000 (?) men in the fruitless assaults and, anticipating that they would be taunted with the small numbers of the defenders, violated the terms of the capitulation by requiring that the Portuguese prisoners should buy their lives by apostatizing. Most of the captives refused and were slain, the rest made 'slaves', as it was usually termed.¹

Elated at the success of his enterprise the Khan of Shiraz, when communicating it to the Shah, whose fickle and dangerous humours on the point of implicit obedience to his instructions he well knew, thought to cover himself by entering on negotiations for peace, but in such a way that they would result in nothing.

He therefore made use of Frs. Leander and Louis Francis, who had been at Shiraz, to carry his terms to the Captain of Hurmuz: these were:

- (a) Half the produce of the Customs of Hurmuz to be ceded to him (Imam Quli Khan).
- (b) Michelangelo Coray (the Syrian Agent of the Grand Duke of Tuscany) with all his effects to be surrendered to him.
- (c) Youths coming from India to Persia via Hurmuz not to be detained there.
- (d) A certain Muslim tribe, which had taken refuge at Hurmuz, to be handed over to him.

¹ Fr. John Thaddeus' letter, 3.1.1619, O.C.D. 237 m., says: "The Persians . . . killed 60 or 70 Portuguese: the others left alive were tied with a piece of wood round their necks and taken on parade through all Persia. . . ."

The two Carmelite Fathers found at Lar five Portuguese of some standing who had been arrested on their way from Isfahan to Hurmuz and thrown into a filthy prison, where they had been in chains for five months: all the Carmelites could do was to furnish these unfortunates with some money and give them the encouragement of an appeal to the mercy of the Shah on his return to his capital. The arrival of Frs. Leander and Louis Francis was hailed with relief in Hurmuz, where the position was desperate. Trade with Persia, whence provisions had come in the past, had been stopped. the fortress and island of Hurmuz lacked water, since Qishm, the wells of which had provided their supply for drinking, was in the hands of the enemy. No income was accruing to the Customs, because merchants had abandoned the port: Persian vessels commanded approach to the island; the hope of the Portuguese lay in the arrival of sufficient force from Goa. Don Luis de Gama wanted to gain time to put Hurmuz in a state for defence and, feigning to be sincere in the negotiations, dispatched Fr. Leander backwards and forwards several times during the heat of the summer months. A Jew, taken by the Fathers as interpreter, although well paid deceived them—"was as perfidious with "men as his race with God": a Christian was even more iniquitous, writing to the Khan of Shiraz that the Carmelites were tricking him (Imam Quli Khan) and working only in the interests of the Portuguese. The Bishop of Cyrene, still in Hurmuz "before joining us", also complicated matters by corresponding surreptitiously with the Khan of Shiraz about the terms without informing the Captain of Hurmuz. One letter from Shiraz of Fr. Leander at this period has been preserved,¹ and the concluding part of it reads:

"Today, the 15th July," (i.e. 1615) "vigil of the solemn commemoration of our Lady" (i.e. of Mt. Carmel) "the prince of Shiraz has written me from his camp, 70 miles away, "to return to Hurmuz and inform the Captain that the latter must first send a present:"² "otherwise peace would not be concluded. So after two days we shall leave (or three, "if my tertian fever continue): it has attacked me three times. I console myself that I "have done nothing more than hear the confessions of 12 Christians, reconcile (to the "Church) three apostates, baptize a female child, and take into the house to cure and "tend several sick Christians, who, thank God, have recovered; but that is reward enough "for greater suffering. It may be that peace will be concluded, but I consider it difficult, "as the minds and desires" (i.e. of the two parties) "are so contrary."

Fr. Leander of the Annunciation got back to Hurmuz and his pastoral work there, 20.8.1615.

Of the survivors from the siege of Gāmbnun and subsequent massacre more than fifty Christians had fallen into the hands of Imam Quli Khan and had been first confined in the fort at Lar. Transferred to Shiraz the viceroy called them before him, made them a little friendly speech, gave them suitable lodging and victuals while they were in the chief town of Fars. When orders came from the Shah to dispatch them to Mazandaran he bestowed on each of those of higher grade a tunic of cloth of gold, on the others a silk tunic, and on all cloaks (i.e. the Persian 'abba) lined with fur to shield them against the bitter cold that prevails at that season of the year on the high plateau of Iran, and then sent them on horseback to Isfahan in the charge of one of his headmen. They reached Isfahan at the end of February 1615, and were confined by the Wazir, who gave orders to the guards to allow them to speak to no one. However a gift—a *douceur*—to the chief of the guards enabled the Carmelite Fathers at Isfahan first to have speech with the two senior prisoners, then with all the Portuguese. They were dirty, unkempt, and in a pitiable state: to alleviate it some thought of apostatizing, but rebuked and brought to their senses by the Fathers went to confession. Materially, too, the Carmelites did what they could to help them with provisions and money for a journey to last little less than a month.

¹ In the MSS. *Hist. Miss.* of Fr. Eusebius ab Omn. Sanct., from which the account of the incidents during the stay of the Bishop of Cyrene and of the loss of Gāmbnun have been taken for the most part, the writings of the Carmelites which were his probable sources are not quoted and apparently no longer extant in the archives, O.C.D. Much of the narrative connected with the fall of Gāmbnun is given in more or less similar wording in the other section of this work dealing with the Hurmuz mission separately.

² Presumably as a token of tribute, or recognition of inferiority, or compensation.

The prisoners reached Farrahabad, near the shore of the Caspian, where the Shah then was, on Holy Saturday—that year the 18th April. On the previous day there had got back from Spain the Augustinian Fr. Melchior of the Angels, who had been commissioned by the persistent merchant-Shah to impress on the Spanish Court that the value of the silk had been assigned by him for a pious use, viz. the endowment of a house of Sufi darwish-es. This Portuguese Religious brought to Isfahan news of having left in Lisbon Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa, the ambassador designate, who was to bring with him a sumptuous present. Once more 'Abbas I gave full credence to that announcement and as an expression of satisfaction accorded the prisoners a benevolent reception, to their surprise, for they anticipated being put to death. He had drink, food and a commodious lodging provided for them.

On the Nativity of S. John Baptist (i.e. June 24, 1615) the Shah ordered illuminations at Farrahabad, and gave 212 Tumans for distribution among them, as well as some other pieces of gold and silver, velvet, damask and silk—'killing them with kindness', as the saying goes. Still to demonstrate their misery, perhaps, or out of neglect by their guards, the Portuguese prisoners continued with tousled hair and beards, so that one day, in one of his caprices, 'Abbas I, remarking that this denoted that they were despising his favours, himself took a pair of scissors and put out his hand to cut off the mane of one hidalgo who, mortified, asked for a respite to comply voluntarily. The prisoners had squandered all the money given them, when three months later, 5.8.1615, the Shah brought them in his train on his return to his capital: the rations given them were inadequate, so that the Carmelites had to nourish them, besides providing six beds for the sick.¹

* * * * *

* * * *

In his ship from England, in or about September 1613, Sir Robert Sherley and his wife Teresa had reached Tatta in Sind, but the Portuguese in that town instigated the natives against him, so that they attempted to blow up his house with gunpowder. On resistance offered one or two of Sherley's retinue were slain, himself maltreated:² as soon as he had landed at Tatta, he had dispatched his own ship to Bantam, unaware that any English were settled at Surat. About the end of September 1614 he went to Agra—he had meantime been hospitably entertained by a petty Rajah: at Agra he stayed only ten days, during which the Jesuit Fathers there used to visit his house daily and say Mass, their church being locked up at the time. According to his statement, about the beginning of August 1615³ he finally got back to Isfahan after an absence of more than six years, thoroughly weary of travelling and desirous of settling down to home life, even in Persia. 'Abbas I is stated to have marked his satisfaction with his envoy in a singular way—by making Sherley share his bedroom the first night after his arrival. But he dumbfounded Sherley and dashed all his hopes by insisting on the latter returning forthwith to Europe on a second embassy. In vain the Englishman strove to decline for the sake of his wife, as well as his own. The story is told by the Carmelite Fr. Redempt:⁴ although he had captured the fort of the king of (Spain and) Portugal at Gãmbra and killed his garrison, with the prisoners the Shah took the line that they were vassals of the king of Spain, his brother and friend, and so he would treat them handsomely and he projected restoring them to their countrymen by sending a Persian envoy with them to Hurmuz and Goa and thence to Spain, in order to give the king of Spain satisfaction for the past hostilities and settle other business. A Persian magnate had first been in view for this and was to go with the Augustinian Fr. Melchior; but this hung fire for some three months:

"At the end of it there arrived Count Robert Sherley . . . with the replies from the

¹ See MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. XVII, book 2, part 2.

² See *English Factory Records*, India Office archives.

³ On 5.8.1615 he reached Farrahabad [*? sic*], states *Hist. Miss.*

⁴ O.C.D. 234 e. *Relación breve del viaje que hizo el Fr. Redento de la Cruz in compañía del Conde Don Roberto Serleo, ambascador del Rey de Persia á Su Majestad Católica desde Asfahan corte de aquel rey hasta Lisboa.*

"mission, on which he had been dispatched to the princes of Christendom years before. . . .
"After having read the letters which he brought from the Christian sovereigns and seen
"the laudatory mention they made of his (Sherley's) good sense, and his methods of pro-
"cedure, so prudent in dealing with business, the Shah determined to send him back once
"more, not caring to dispatch a Muslim on account of the bad reports he had had of all
"those who had gone to Europe, how they committed a thousand outrages and got drunk,
"to the great disgust of the European sovereigns and to his own discredit and dishonour,
"so different to Count Robert's methods. So he ('Abbas I) wished him (Sherley) to go
"back, taking the prisoners with him as an offering in India, and then go on to Spain to
"discuss important matters with the king there: and, seeing what honours his Catholic
"Majesty and His Holiness had bestowed on him and how they had belauded him in their
"letters, it appeared to the Shah that he would be acceptable to them, and promised
"himself a successful result. But to discover Sherley's own mind on the subject the Shah
"went on" (for some time) "probing him, asking him what in his (Sherley's) opinion
"should be done with those Portuguese prisoners: and he (Sherley) continued to reply that
"it appeared to him best to send them back in a decent manner and in no wise to lose
"the friendship of the greatest and most powerful king in Christendom, the one who most
"professed to be his friend. Several times the Shah asked him the question, and finding
"him firm and speaking ever in high praise of his Catholic Majesty the king resolved to
"reveal to him the project and, taking him one day to a hunting-party and paying him
"unusual attentions in order to place him (Sherley) under the greater obligation, told
"him that it would be rendering him ('Abbas I) a great service, were he to turn back and
"undertake once more this journey and embassy.

"At those words he (Sherley) became very upset, his heart transfixed by an arrow as
"it were, recalling in his imagination all that he had suffered on" (his last) "so lengthy
"a journey. So he refused to go, making excuses as well as he could and saying that it
"was not yet two months since he had arrived, and that he had not had a single day's
"rest after such protracted journeys and so many trials that he had suffered in company
"with his wife, and they would greatly desire that the Shah should desist and not
"send him to Spain, where he had been so discredited and made the object of baseless
"calumnies, nor to India, where he had been so persecuted by the Portuguese, who tried
"to deprive him of his life and, when they could not succeed, burnt and destroyed his
"belongings.

"None of this sufficed to satisfy the Shah, because he had set his mind on it and so
"pressed him (Sherley) very hard to make him agree. As he (Sherley) could do no more,
"he begged him to allow him a day to think over it well, and over the position of his affairs.
"The king granted him this: and then he (Sherley) went off to the Discalced Carmelite
"Fathers in order that they might commend the matter to our Lord and counsel him as
"to what was most expedient for him. When this had been done very carefully by the
"Fathers they came to the conclusion that he should undertake this embassy, for they
"were led to see that from it there could be secured the freedom of those Portuguese captives,
"which was endangered unless he should go on it; for they could otherwise never get their
"liberty, or else would receive it too late, as a risk was being run of some of them becoming
"Muslims, being young and inexperienced. Further, with his (Sherley's) departure it
"would be as it were restoring life to Hurmuz which was in such great need, being without
"provisions for the food" (of the inhabitants) "and without water to drink, all of which
"had to come from Persia (there are only a few water-tanks there (Hurmuz) which are
"filled by the rain), without money for public or private use, because of the caravan trade
"with Persia having stopped, to such an extent that they had no money to pay the soldiers,
"and so each day they were mutinying and they stood in danger of the Persians recom-
"mencing the war, for the latter knew of all the above-mentioned straits in which they
"were . . . and with the great confusion which reigned in Hurmuz among the Portuguese
"themselves, the soldiers mutinying and others running away and the Muslims in the

"fortress, who were inviting the Persians to come there" (and take it) "as the Fathers were well informed. Moreover, since (Portuguese) India was everywhere at war with the Mogul . . . and much harassed by other enemies from Europe, so that at that time the Portuguese stood in greater need of receiving aid than of dispatching it elsewhere: and also, as the king of Persia had disclosed to the Count some important affairs, with which he (Sherley) was to deal in the service of his Majesty and for the weal of Christians: and finally because, while the matter stood at this point, letters from the Dutch reached him (Sherley) promising him very advantageous terms if he would recommend them to the Shah and support their requests to the latter—(a development) which would be of very great harm to all (Portuguese) India. So, seeing that from his departure many results would accrue . . . and, as he was always so inclined to do anything useful in the service of his Catholic Majesty (of Spain) as is to be seen in greater detail from a paper which he has indited, always preferring it to that of foreigners, even to that of his own nation, for all these reasons and others it appeared to the Fathers very convenient that he (Sherley) should undertake this embassy and, although it seemed to him hard to have to go to a country where the people had done him so much ill as the Portuguese had done, still for all that he made up his mind to do it, trusting in God, Who, just as He had delivered him from so many trials and perils to his life, would now too do so: and so he said that, since it seemed to them" (the Carmelites) "that this journey of his was for the glory of God and" (useful for) "the service of his Catholic Majesty, he would risk all, even if it were his life: and so he sent the reply to the Shah, who was so eager to know it.

"Then, when he ('Abbas I) learnt of his (Sherley's) decision, his satisfaction was so great that he swore by his head that whatever he (Sherley) might ask of him, he would grant it. The first time the Count met him, he said that, though he had sent to let the king know of his decision to go on his service, still it would have to be on his granting him a favour, and unless it were granted he would not leave, even were he to cause his (Sherley's) body to be chopped in pieces. This favour was that the Shah should give order that a Discalced Carmelite Father go with him. The king said that he would send one, as he did in fact, as will be proved by an order of his sealed with his royal seal, a copy of which will be appended below.

"This injunction caught the Fathers at a time when they were in great straits and—because at that juncture there were only two Fathers in residence to undertake such a duty, one the present prior, Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Elisacus, the other Fr. Redempt of the Cross, who had been appointed Prior by the Chapter General in Rome, the arrival of whose letters patent was daily expected. They were greatly disturbed, seeing themselves so bound on the one hand by their duty to their Order and on the other by the Shah's command, which had so much force behind it in view of the ambassador's determination in no wise to leave without the company of one or the other of them. . . . And, although the Shah indicated that it should be Fr. Redempt, in order that Fr. John should remain in that country, and issued instructions accordingly, still with all that . . . and the small desire Fr. Redempt had to go, in the end (for all the Shah having issued his orders and considering his fiat accepted) as it had to be one or the other, and each had so many reasons for not leaving the Mission, it was left to the casting of lots to determine . . . and after invocation of the Holy Spirit the name of Fr. Redempt was drawn out by the ambassador himself, who on seeing it went himself to kiss his hand, full of joy: and so that business was settled. . . ."

Although when this decision was taken Fr. John Thaddeus held the position of Prior, the other Religious merely that of Superior at the convent, the letters patent, or commission, for this journey were issued by Fr. John Thaddeus after Fr. Redempt and Sherley had left Persia and when notification had been received from the Praepositus General in Rome of the former's jurisdiction having been raised and extended to that of "Vicar General" of the

[illegible]

'FARMAN'

i.e. decree, of September 1615 by Shah 'Abbas I directing that Fr. Redempt of the Cross, O.C.D., should accompany Sir Robert Sherley on a mission to the sovereigns of Europe
(In the archives of the Order, Rome)

Carmelites in the East, etc., and of Fr. Redempt's commission as Prior of Isfahan. The letters patent ran, therefore:¹

"Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Eliseus, Vicar General of the Discalced Carmelites of the 'Congregation of S. Elias of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel, who 'are dwelling in the kingdom of Persia, in Hurmuz and in the East Indies, to Fr. Redempt 'of the Cross, Prior, and professed priest of the said Congregation, eternal salvation.

"Since the king of the Persians has committed some very important business to Count 'Robert Sherley, the Englishman, particularly conducing to the glory of God and the 'benefit of Christianity and also to the liberation of many Christians now living in the 'power of, and slavery to the said king: and since he (Sherley) was unwilling to undertake 'that commission laid on him unless the aforesaid king should provide some one of the 'Discalced Carmelite Fathers residing at the court of the said king as a companion for 'the journey and counsellor for his soul, the king strictly ordered me to appoint for this 'office the Reverend Fr. Redempt of the Cross, Prior of our convent. Wherefore, in 'order that there may be no impediment to the glory of God and the consolation of so 'many of the faithful and also so that I may comply with the king's desires and the wishes 'of the aforesaid and so well-deserving Count, we enjoin on you, the said Fr. Prior by 'virtue of holy obedience to accompany the above-named Count throughout his journey 'to Rome, and as far as wherever our superiors may desire on your arrival.

"Moreover we also give you as a companion Brother Elisaeus of S. John Baptist, a Lay 'Brother of this our holy Order, so that by bearing each other's burdens on so great a 'journey you may better fulfil the law of God; and on account of the great distance we 'grant you the faculty to ride on horseback and, if need be, permission to eat meat. . . . 'In faith of which we have issued these present letters signed by our hand, and furnished 'with the seal of our Order, in our convent of Jesus and Mary at Isfahan, the 19th of the 'month of March, A.D. 1616, Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Eliseus, Vicar General."

Fortunately the 'fiat' or 'farman' bearing the seals of 'Abbas I has been preserved in the archives of the Order in Rome: a photograph is here reproduced, and in the appendix a transcription in the modern Persian typescript for any orientalist interested. It may be translated as follows:

"To Allah kingdom.

"The royal command is issued that:

"Whereas the venerable and respected Padres, the notable Christian recluses, Padre 'Juan² and Padre Redempto, have come to Our royal Court from the land of the Franks 'and have been in these regions, and whereas at this juncture We have dispatched the 'worthy knight's son,³ Don Robert Sherley, as an envoy and ambassador,⁴ to the land of 'the Franks to the exalted Frank sovereigns,⁵ We have directed that the Father Superior, 'Padre Juan, should dispatch his companion Fr. Redempt in company with the above-'named knight's son for the purpose of inspiring confidence,⁶ so that they may go together 'to the Courts of the Frank sovereigns⁷ and convey messages⁸ on behalf of Our Majesty, 'while he" (i.e. Padre Juan) "himself should remain in these parts in attendance on Us. 'In accordance with the royal command he dispatched Fr. Redempt along with the 'aforesaid knight's son, and We have kept Padre Juan here. In whatsoever place and in

¹ Latin text is given in O.C.D. 234 c. (*Relación breve*, etc., of Fr. Redempt, cited.)

² The name in Persian is transliterated as Juwan, not Khwan, as one would expect if he were called by the Spanish for 'John': nor 'Juwani' if by the Italian rendering: it is more the sound of his signature 'Jhoan'.

³ *Baigzadeh* in Persian, 'son of a Baig': perhaps 'knight' alone would express it.

⁴ The word *ilchi* is used.

⁵ Or 'as a guarantee', a 'surety', i.e. as to Sherley's identity and qualifications as a real ambassador.

⁶ *Padishahan* here used.

⁷ *Risalat rasanand*—literally as above: 'deliver', or 'execute their mission' is no doubt meant.

⁸ 'Salatin', plural of 'Sultan' used.

"whatever province of Our imperial realm the above-named Padre (Redempt) may arrive, the respected local governors, the headmen¹ and people of that province must accord him a kindly welcome and pay him the utmost honour and respect. They should not hesitate to carry out the command anywhere, but consider it their bounden duty, in which they must not fail.

"Written in the month of Ramazan 1024" (i.e. September A.D. 1615).

The inscription on the seal at the head of the 'farman' runs:² (in the circle round it): The slave of the king successor (i.e. Imam 'Ali) 'Abbas; (around the circle): O Lord bless the Prophet, the Successor, the Lady (i.e. Fatimch), the Grandsons (i.e. Hasan and Husain), the Devotee (i.e. 'Ali Zain-u-'Abidin), Baqir, the Truth-teller, Kazim, Riza, Taqi, Naqi, 'Askari and Mahdi.

The narrative of Fr. Redempt goes on to relate:

"Along with the ambassador on the eve of S. Michael in September" (i.e. 28.9.1615) "the Father was summoned by the Shah in order to receive his dispatch, the Shah enjoining on him repeatedly to bear witness to the king of Spain and to the Pope that he was sending as his ambassador Count Robert Sherley, whom he had already sent once before and that he was giving him plenipotentiary authority to negotiate on and settle the affairs which were being entrusted to him. . . . With this we took our leave, kissing his hand as is the custom. To give the more weight to what was said above, he (the Shah) furnished him (Sherley) with three letters, one for His Holiness, another for the king of Spain, the third for the Praepositus General. . . .

"On 10.10.1615 the Father left with the ambassador: they reached Shiraz midway between Isfahan and Hurmuz, where it was necessary to stay some days for the good of the souls of those prisoners taken from the Portuguese at Bandar (Gāmburūn); because the ambassador carried very express orders from the king for all of them to be handed over to him, and he had great difficulty, seeing that as the chief persons in that region were holding on to them" (as slaves) "they were hiding these prisoners. However, though some could not be found, the rest appeared, the industry of the Father in seeing that the king's order came to their notice contributing much to this: and he assured them that, if they would come to the ambassador's house, they would be safe.³ So they began to come in of their own accord without their masters' knowledge, the latter remaining duped thus, and very resentful. The ambassador attended to their bodily necessities, giving them food and clothing; the Father to their souls, hearing their confessions and letting them hear Mass, which he said daily in order thus to eject from their souls the poison imbibed through mixing with that miserable race so long.

". . . Together with all these men they left Shiraz and arrived at a town called Jahrum, seven days' distance from Hurmuz. At the request of the ambassador the Father went on in advance to apprise Don Luis de Gama, Captain of Hurmuz, of the reason for his coming. . . .⁴

¹ *Wilayat* may be used as 'village' in current language, or 'province': 'Daruga' -- here 'headman'.

² 999 A.H. = the year beginning 30.10.1590. One wonders why his seal bears (and retains 25 years later) that date? Did he himself date his reign from that year, or is it because of the fanciful appearance of the three 'nines'?

³ Sherley paid 400 Tumans = 5,400 scudi in ransoming them, states Fr. Eusebius in MSS. *Hist. Miss.*

⁴ To this period belongs, no doubt, an undated Itinerary, Isfahan to Hurmuz, preserved in the archives of the Order in Rome: in the possible lack of any 'route book' of A.D. 1600 it may be worth recording. The spelling of the names of places makes identification with modern sites and stages difficult: the Itinerary is in Spanish, therefore by a Spanish Father before the fall of Hurmuz, 1622: the spelling here used is the official Indian system for transliteration of Persian words. Farsakh = *circa* 3½ miles.

(1) ISFAHAN to VAZUDAR [? sic]—3 farsakhs. This is an open caravansarai, with a few houses: when the bridge is passed a road to the right is taken, which leads to Chaharbagh.

(2) VAZUDAR [? sic] to MAYAR—6 farsakhs. This is a closed caravansarai with some houses.

(3) To QUMISHIHH—6 farsakhs. It has a closed caravansarai.

(4) To KARAWANSARAI KHAN—10 farsakhs. At one league there is Hisa bchi [? sic]. Another league farther on the right side there is Duradka [? sic, Durudgah ?]: one passes through the middle of it, and then turns to the left, and passes by the caravansarai of MAQSUDBAIGI. The Karawansarai Khan is a caravansarai in the style of a castle.

"... The Father reached Hurmuz at nightfall on the feast of our Lady of Hope¹—a day which is celebrated with great rejoicing in Hurmuz. His arrival caused great delight to all those in the town, who were hoping that an end would soon be put to the tribulations" (then) "existing in that place, and so for that reason and on other grounds the "Discalced Carmelite Fathers who reside in that port . . . welcomed the Father with "incredible pleasure and satisfaction. . . .

"On the following day he met the Captain (of Hurmuz), and gave him a letter of credence "from the ambassador: they then discussed the position regarding his (Sherley's) coming: "whether he could safely enter Hurmuz and whether the friendly relations interrupted by "the recent warfare were to be renewed: and he (Fr. Redempt) brought forward the terms "demanded on the part of the king of Persia, so that it might be examined whether peace "should be concluded in accordance with them, because otherwise he (Sherley) brought "orders not to proceed any further. The Captain was extremely pleased with his (the "ambassador's) coming and, having examined and well studied everything sent off a man "to the ambassador with letters of his own and from the Father, in which the Captain of "Hurmuz expressed how greatly he appreciated everything, especially the ambassador's "coming, saying that they would be able to judge this by acts (more than by words): and "the Captain then assured the Father that he should not be dubious about the ambassador "entering Hurmuz and the issue of the negotiations being successful. He (Fr. Redempt) "wrote and told him (Sherley) to come on with all assurance, because he would be well "received by the Captain and town, adding that there was no other subject of talk than "about the reception to be given him.

- (5) To YAZDIKIWAST 4 farsakhs. It is a place between two ridges.
- (6) To SHULGHISTAN 8 farsakhs. This is a small mosque (shrine) and Imamzadeh. On leaving it one takes the left hand.
- (7) To ABADEH 7 farsakhs. It is a village. There is no caravansarai. It has at the entrance a mosque.
- (8) To SURMAQ 4½ farsakhs. It is a little village. It has a bazar. There is no caravansarai. A private house is to be noticed.
- (9) To DEHBID 12 farsakhs. There is a caravansarai.
- (10) To KARGUN (i.e. Khan-i-Kargun) 4 farsakhs. There is a caravansarai.
- (11) To MASHHAD (i.e. Madar-i-Sulaiman) 6 farsakhs. There is a "villa." They say it was of Solomon's mother.
- (12) To SIWAND 4 farsakhs. A village on a hill. The caravansarai lies below.
- (13) To MIKASHI [? sic] 8 farsakhs. The left hand is taken, and if the river is in flood the right, and it cannot be passed. At 2 farsakhs from the place lies Naqsh-i-Rustam, a fortress on a rock. At Mikashi there is Chihil Minar (i.e. "The 40 Columns" Persepolis).
- (14) To BANDAMIR 5 farsakhs. There are some mills and some houses.
- (15) To ZARQAN 3 farsakhs. A place a little off the road to the left.
- (16) To KARAWANSARAI 2 farsakhs.
- (17) To SHIRAZ 2 farsakhs.
- (18) To BABA HAJI 5 farsakhs. A caravansarai. The road to the right is taken: one goes along one side of a mountain, and passes the river by a bridge.
- (19) To MUSAFIRI 5 farsakhs. A caravansarai at the foot of a mountain.
- (20) To KHAFA [? sic] 8 farsakhs. A hamlet of date-palms wherearaq of Portuguese grapes is made. It is a bad road. At 3 leagues Tarsu [? sic], 2 leagues off the road. A large river is passed. . . .
- (21) KARAWANSARAI Camerbeik [? sic for Qanbar Baig?] 3 farsakhs. The road is bad at first, afterwards at 2 leagues.
- (22) GIARU [? sic for JAHIRUM] 5 farsakhs. A town with many palm-trees . . . road all good.
- (23) CHAI-I-TALKH 5 farsakhs. A caravansarai. Bad road.
- (24) JIYUM 6 farsakhs. A good place. There is a fort. Good road. One passes a ridge of stone, with a water-cistern (ab-anbar) in the middle, and river is crossed near the place.
- (25) BUNARU 3 farsakhs. The first place in Lar province: good road. There is a fort in ruins on the summit of a mountain pass.
- (26) BERRE [? sic] 6 farsakhs. A place with a fort in ruins. Two ab-anbars on the road.
- (27) DIRKUH [? sic] 2 farsakhs. After there are many ab-anbars, and another cistern 2 leagues from Lar.
- (28) LAR 5 farsakhs. Has a caravansarai.
- (29) KARAWANSARAI 6 farsakhs. With 3 cisterns at one league there is a caravansarai. On the right at 1 league a place Dizkurd.
- (30) KHURMA 6 farsakhs.
- (31) YANIKIDALIN [? sic] 6 farsakhs.
- (32) KINBAZIRKAN [? sic] 6 farsakhs.
- (33) QABRISTAN 4 farsakhs.
- (34) To the river 6 farsakhs.
- (35) KISHIGAN [? sic] to Hurmuz or Bandar (Gämburun) 6 farsakhs.

All of the above were, 3 centuries later, recognized stages still, except (2), (4), (13), (21), (26), (27), and the road beyond Lar, the names there given being unknown to the present compiler.

¹ Perhaps 18th December is meant.

"So, when he reached the port (i.e. Gāmbnun), the ambassador sent to summon Fr. "Redempt and the Captain sent a vessel with soldiers very well turned out, and he (Sir "R. Sherley) entered Hurmuz, 2.1.1616, received with great jubilation, as is described "elsewhere. It pleased the Lord for all business between the ambassador and the Captain "to be adjusted satisfactorily (with the Father always assisting): and so (the renewal of) "friendly relations was publicly announced, and the road was opened for the passage of "trade first on the day of the Kings" (i.e. the Epiphany, 6th January) "following, to the "great delight and satisfaction of the whole population. He (Sir R. Sherley) also handed "over all the Portuguese prisoners¹ to the Captain of Hurmuz: and so were fulfilled all "the hopes of Fr. Redempt and his companion to see Hurmuz relieved of its straits and "those (Portuguese) Christians set at liberty without a single one remaining in Persia, "thanks to the Lord, who did this.

"... All that month they stayed in the fortress, waiting for a fair wind to leave for "Goa: and on 30.1.1616, at night, they sailed and took 3 days to pass an island called "Larak, 3 leagues away from Hurmuz. . . . All the rest of the voyage was very prosperous "and fortunate, without any accident or any death occurring, even among the horses, "although there were many on board.² Land was seen on the morning of the feast of the "Chair of S. Peter" (i.e. at Antioch, 22 February) "and they reached the bar outside Goa "in 24 days on 24.2.1616, vigil of S. Matthias, the Apostle, to the marvel of all at so rapid "and fortunate a voyage.

"With a letter from the ambassador, Fr. Redempt went to see the Viceroy of Goa, who "gave him a hearty welcome, not only because of the account which he said he had of the "services Fr. Redempt had rendered while in Persia to India and the Portuguese, but also "because of the news of the arrival of the ambassador which he brought, and so treated "him with much courtesy and gave him a solemn reception, as related elsewhere. They "entered Goa on the eve of S. Cyrites the Carmelite, the ambassador, having lodged during "the interval in a house which the viceroys of Goa possess 2 leagues distant, entertained "very well until the house appointed for his residence in Goa had been got ready. Four "days later the ambassador had an interview with the Viceroy to discuss the terms of "which he was the bearer: and the Viceroy summoned Fr. Redempt to be present on that "occasion, when all that the Captain of Hurmuz had done with regard to" (the renewal of) "friendly relations with Persia received confirmation. There were some persons who bore "ill will to the ambassador and tried to discredit him and place difficulties in the way of "his mission, and to do him all the harm they could (as they had done in Spain and at "Sindi" (i.e. Tatta) "by trying to bias the Viceroy and other leading people; but it pleased "God that they did not prevail . . . for they were saying no less than that they" (Robert Sherley and his wife) "were heretics and had conspired against the crown of the king of "Spain, and that he (Sherley) now was coming with a deceitful intent, having been sent "by the king of Persia to spy out that country, and other similar things . . . this fire was "later extinguished by the proofs that the ambassador and his wife gave of their Chris- "tianity. . . . The lord Archbishop, Don Cristoval de Lisboa, also showed him (Fr. "Redempt) much kindness, for he is very devoted to our holy Mother, Teresa of Jesus, "and displayed a great desire for her sons to come and dwell in that town,³ because he "was unable himself to give permission to found a convent without the express sanction of the king "of Portugal). He wrote however an excellent letter asking permission for it of the king, "giving many good reasons and indicating the site where they might be put, and in order "to show his goodwill in so far as he was able he gave Fr. Redempt written sanction for the "Fathers of his Order who are in Persia and Hurmuz to come and make an oratory" (in Goa).

¹ Fr. John Thaddeus stated, 3.1.1619, that there were 70 set free at Hurmuz.

² Another instance of the export of ponies to India, which was flourishing still in 1910.

³ On 3.7.1614 Pope Paul V (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. XV, p. 386) had written to the Archbishop of Goa asking him to help the Carmelites in their work, especially at Hurmuz: "Therefore whatever you do on their behalf will be very pleasing to Us. . . ." See appendix for text.

Sir Robert Sherley and his Carmelite companions had reached Goa after the annual convoy (for 1616) of ships to Lisbon had sailed, and thus were delayed in Goa almost a year. A very lengthy account of their voyage follows in Fr. Redempt's narrative: it may be of interest in showing how life passed on board a galleon in that century, and extracts are therefore appended.

"... The Viceroy had had given to Fr. Redempt an excellent cabin and for himself, 'should he stand in need of anything, 100 pardaos . . . which Fr. Redempt sent on to the 'Fathers, his brethren in Persia . . . and so, bidden farewell by the Viceroy and the 'Archbishop and Inquisitors, . . . he embarked at night on 1.2.1617, and on the 2nd, 'the feast of the Purification of our Lady, they hoisted sails on the ship and started very 'early in the morning (2.2.1617). . . .

"... Eight days after embarkation Lent began, i.e. on 8.2.1617, and so they arranged 'to perform some spiritual exercises . . . for, besides Fr. Redempt and his companion, 'there were on board that ship one Dominican Father, one Franciscan, and the chaplain 'of the ship. . . . Every Sunday and feast-day at least two Masses were said; one altar 'was set up by the captain of the ship on the poop for the whole ship's company, and in 'the ambassador's cabin another very nice one was arranged, where Mass was said for 'the ambassador and his wife and their attendants and others who might go, and when 'on account of rain or any inconvenience it could not be said for the whole ship the officers 'heard Mass there, when Fr. Redempt or one of the others would say it. . . .

"There were about 400 persons on board: on three days of the week the Office was sung 'with all the solemnity the Fathers were able to give it. At the Mass which was celebrated 'in the ambassador's cabin the other Fathers and Lay Brothers always went to Communion. 'On Easterday a very remarkable altar . . . of gold was set up in the cabin of the 'ambassador. . . .

"... We passed the Line on 24.2.1617 . . . a boy fell into the sea and there was no 'way to save him: the same happened to two other men who knowing how to swim saved 'themselves: some men died of sickness, but few. . . . On 4.5.1617. Ascension Day . . . 'we were so near the Cape of Good Hope as to be not more than 100 leagues away . . . 'but it was God's will that they should be humbled by His sending so strong a contrary 'wind that the pilot was forced to stand out away from the land, from which we were 'distant 5 or 6 leagues, and out to sea. . . . At last He gave them a very good wind and 'on 22.5.1617 . . . all thought that they had passed the Cape, so much so that, as is 'always the custom, they said a Mass of thanksgiving to God, as a sign of pleasure for 'his giving them so prosperous a voyage. . . . They were mistaken, however, for a great 'gale blew them back in the night . . . at midnight, as 25th May began, the feast of 'Corpus Christi, the Lord was pleased . . . to give them a very favourable wind . . . 'when morning dawned they saw land so near, not 3 leagues away, that all the officers 'were greatly surprised . . . it appeared to them to be the coast of Angola. But when 'it grew light, they found they had made a mistake, as they could recognize clearly that 'it was the Cape of Good Hope, . . .

"... In former times, because of the gales and constant storms which all ships met 'at this point, they used to call it 'the Cape of Storms', until the time of Queen Catharine 'of Portugal, who gave it the name of 'Cape of Good Hope', because, on passing it, all 'reached their desired goal.

"... After passing the Cape little by little they began to enter the winds they call 'general'" (i.e. "the trades") "always astern. Then the captain of the ship communicated 'to the officers the sailing orders he had from the king, viz. in no wise were they to make 'the island of St. Helena, on account of there being constantly there enemy craft going 'to take in water, as had happened many times to Portuguese ships, which had to fight 'them. For other reasons the king also forbade the ship to put into Angola, although it 'is Portuguese territory. They discussed what it would be best to do for the welfare of

"the ship, seeing that, as they had taken about 4 months to pass the Cape, it appeared "that there would not be sufficient water to reach Portugal. . . .

"... But it pleased the Lord that so much water remained in the casks that there "would be more than enough, so it was unnecessary to make the land: in particular the "king's casks, 150 in number, were well supplied, and also the 38 of the ambassador. . . . "The Religious were drinking from these, and many other poor people to whom they gave "it: the ambassador and his wife were being very charitable daily and giving free rations, "not only of water but of many other things . . . for there were many poor persons on "board that ship, who had no one else to come to their aid. . . . As his household and "dependants numbered more than 25 persons, he had brought large stocks" (of food) "to supply their other needs.

"On 2.6.1617 they passed the latitude of St. Helena, 16 degrees . . . on 21.6.1617 that "of Ascension Island, 8 degrees. . . . On the feast-day of S. Antony of Padua, 13.6.1617, "they fired off some pieces of artillery on board the ship in honour of the saint as he was "a Portuguese. There was a solemn Office, Mass being sung by Fr. Isidore . . . in the "afternoon a comedy, very well done, was played, and afforded much amusement. On "24.6.1617 at night the latitude of the island of Fernando de Noronha was passed, 6 degrees. "On 3.7.1617 the 'general'" (i.e. 'trade') "winds ceased, and very little way was made "until 9.7.1617, when we were at 8 degrees north. . . .

"... The voyage direct from Goa to Portugal is 3,700 leagues; but, as we were tacking "so much, especially since the Cape of Good Hope, the passage was increased to more "than 5,000 leagues. . . . On 16.7.1617, the day of our Lady of Carmel, the captain and "crew of the ship took it on them to make a great festival of it, because it was the name-day "of our ship and for other reasons. . . . The ambassador and his wife were foremost in "assisting in this, being so devoted to our Lady of Carmel and wearing her scapular: and "thus they gave some very fine pieces of cloth of gold and silk, with which an altar was "decked as handsomely as it could be done in any church. Vespers were sung and after- "wards there were some dances: and, on the day itself, Fr. Redempt said the Mass. . . . "On that day many went to Confession and Communion, and took the scapular . . . the "ambassador had food given to the poor people and invited the captain of the ship to "dinner. After dinner the crew of the ship performed a comedy very well, and they "celebrated the festival in other ways to the great pleasure of all. The lady Countess sent "a very appetizing refreshment for the performers (in the play). . . .

"... The coast of Guinea begins shortly after passing the Line . . . we passed this "latitude with a fair wind and so did not feel the heat so much, although the rain was "so heavy that it damaged much gear of the ship . . . after some great calms, which lasted "almost a month, during which we made very little way.

"These calms beget various sicknesses, which are customary on this route and which "they call—*Mal de Loanda*"—(the Loanda disease or fever). "Tired out by so long a "journey and such hard work and discomforts with insufficient good food, and what little "there is has already lost its value as nourishment, so that it serves of very little benefit "and sustenance, the bodies of all become so debilitated that even the very sailors come "to lack sufficient strength for the work they have to do for the trimming of the ship, "and so, whoever catches this sickness, it goes at once to his chest and suffocates him in "two days.¹

"As the number of cases of sickness increased and some men were dying, and provisions "for everyone were coming to an end, and there was very little water left, on account of "which all the men were without the necessary strength to do their work—it was now "nearly 7 months since we left Goa without having touched land anywhere, nor having "had any relaxation—and, as the crew knew that the orders of the Viceroy were not to "make land before getting to Lisbon . . . the sailors of the ship with one accord decided

¹ Fr. Redempt, who wrote this in 1617, was to die on board ship off this same coast of Guinea on his return voyage in 1619, after nursing the Lay Brother Elisaeus—perhaps of this very sickness.

"to go to the Captain to ask him to touch at the first land sighted. . . . The captain therefore summoned some of the chief persons on the vessel and the officers and laid before them what had been requested of him, and he read them the orders that the Viceroy had given, so that they might say what they thought. . . . It was the unanimous opinion that, seeing the great straits of the ship, the order should not be executed, but land made and so they agreed and decided to make the island of Terceira, because of it being well provided with everything needed. So they made straight for it, and on 24th August, S. Bartholomew's day, in the morning the island of Flores was sighted and was the first land we saw since the Cape of Good Hope. This is the first island out of sixty in the Azores, as they are called. On the morning of the following Saturday three sail of the enemy were sighted, and the crew prepared to fight and all the guns and arms got ready . . . and we found they were Moors with some Flemings and French mixed. They also set themselves in array to fight. They attacked the ship twice with great energy and courage, but it availed them little and they did no damage to our ship, nor to anyone: while they received great hurt, because some of them were killed and one of their ships was badly mauled and according to what we could see would probably go to the bottom, because it remained far astern. . . . Afterwards we struck a very fair wind, and entered a channel which has on either hand the islands of S. George and Graciosa, there being only 4 or 5 leagues distance between them."

After a description how they got in touch with the shore at Terceira:

" . . . We learnt that the senior ship, which had left Goa alone more than 20 days before us, had been for 40 days there waiting for the fleet from Portugal, because news had been received from the king that, on account of the insecurity of the route with so many enemies about, we should await the Fleet, which would come out from Lisbon. . . . On Sunday, 3.9.1617, we left with the senior ship. On the 4th the wind changed . . . so that we could not make latitude 40, where the Portuguese fleet was waiting to accompany us to Lisbon and defend us from any enemy there might be. The wind increased so that it took us almost to the latitude of Cape S. Vincent and very near it. . . . We reached land, 25.9.1617, . . . and excellent pilots came out. At 10 o'clock at night the ships entered" (i.e. the Tagus) "not without risk. . . . The captain fired a rocket, at which many boats came out bringing large sums of money to pay the king's dues: some persons versed in this said that the dues on the two ships would reach a total of about 200,000 scudi. . . . On 27.9.1617 . . . the galleys from Lisbon came to help to take the ships up the river . . . arriving at Lisbon on 28.9.1617, the vigil of S. Michael, without meeting any disaster on so lengthy a voyage which, on account of the little winds we had, lasted 7 months 25 days. . . ."

From Lisbon Fr. Redempt went to Madrid to discover in advance whether Sir R. Sherley would on this occasion be given due recognition at the Court of Spain as the accredited ambassador of 'Abbas I, and not slighted and ignored as in 1610. In the Vatican archives no papers on the subject of his reception and negotiations in Madrid, or of his subsequent wanderings in Europe after 1619 have come to the notice of the compiler of the present work. The reverend author of *En Persia* (vol. III, p. 33) does however hint at the Spanish Court preferring to treat with Fr. Redempt rather than with the Englishman, and at the replies to the proposals or claims of the Shah being entrusted to the Carmelite to take back to Persia.¹

From Madrid, presumably—as there is no indication of his having been in Rome to present it personally—Fr. Redempt in 1618 or early 1619 had forwarded to Rome the letter from

¹ The same author, in his *La Orden de Sta Teresa . . . y las Misiones Carmelitanas*, p. 172 (followed by the compiler of *Series Illustrata Professorum*, etc., Fasc. I, p. 48), makes Fr. Redempt author of *Memoranda* of his embassies in Persia and in Spain, MSS. of 1616. If other than the account of the sea-voyage quoted above—which stops short in Lisbon—the present compiler has not noticed the portion regarding negotiations in Spain in the Archives, O.C.D.

Shah 'Abbas to Pope Paul V, who answered it only on 25.7 1619 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 13, p. 197):

"We have received the letter of Your Highness, which You had given for Us to the Religious Redempt of the Order of the Discalced Carmelites: and We perused it with great attention and delight of the mind, as was fitting, inasmuch as We found it all overflowing with matter productive of gladness. For how great a joy ought to imbue Us seeing that the most powerful king of Asia greatly celebrated in reputation for his courage and prudence seeks with such assiduity Our goodwill and strives to be joined with Us in a firm treaty of friendship. Verily if no other reason were to exist, for this one ground at all events We should be greatly stimulated to like Your Highness particularly; but actually there are many others which in Our judgment claim for themselves Our high regard for You. For on sure testimony We have learnt that Your Highness receives very politely and honourably and treats generously Christians who set out from Our countries to Your dominions, but in particular you manifest this to the Discalced Carmelite Religious, men excelling in uprightness and sagacity who can be of no little use to You. We have likewise understood that You are thinking of building a noble church, worthy of Your magnificence, for the Christians who dwell there: and for these things We return Your Highness, as We ought, Our greatest thanks, and for Your goodwill so well disposed towards the Christian religion We protest that We owe very much to You. Therefore We shall always be prepared to respond with whatever good offices We can to a suchlike disposition of Yours. Meanwhile We shall not cease to pray God unremittingly for the happy state of Your Highness, so that these brilliant victories which You yourself have won hitherto over the most inhuman Ottoman tyrant, enemy of the name of Christian, He may deign to augment with new triumphs daily for Your glory and the advantage of Christians. That too We shall ask of God the Father of mercies with the whole kindness of Our heart, which indeed We deem to be the one thing wanting to Your felicity and to Our perfect delight in You, that He will graciously cause to grow and come to due maturity the seeds of Christian religion which He has planted in You. That thus some time We may be able to embrace Your Highness along with the other most powerful Christian kings in the perfect love which is in Christ Jesus, these shall be Our perpetual orisons, and O! would that God will grant them. But as far as concerns those things which in Your name Redempt the Carmelite caused to be set out to Us, let Your Highness persuade himself that they will always be near to Our heart, and for You in all sincerity We wish once more that salvation, which is the true one, and most lovingly beg it of God. Given at S. Mary Major, Rome, 25th July 1619. . . ."

As to Fr. Redempt the following document¹—doubtless a translation from the Spanish—exists in the Carmelite archives, and rather indicates from the mention of Sherley's name that the negotiations were discussed and concluded with him:

"Instructions from the king of Spain to Fr. Redempt of the Cross C.S., *who by command of his Majesty goes to Persia.*

"Fr. Redempt of the Cross, because of the satisfaction I have had from your person and your proceedings, and from the zeal with which you have dealt with the matters of the embassy sent me by the king of Persia with Don Robert Sherley, as it is necessary to send to Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa (whom I have dispatched as ambassador to that king) and inform him of what has been concluded and approved in the negotiations with the king's ambassador, and to give him these instructions so that he may be well informed of the whole position, and to cause the king of Persia to understand the esteem in which he ought to hold the goodwill, with which I accept the peace which he has sent to offer me and request of me, as also the favour which I grant his vassals for trading, it has seemed fit to me to commit to you this service and commission, which I hope that you

¹ O.C.D. 236 a.

"will execute in (such) a manner that I (shall) remain well pleased and ever happy to recompense it and show you favours and graciousness in this respect.

"You are to embark in two galleons, which are now fitting out in Lisbon, and of which Ruy Freire d'Andrade is the Captain-in-Chief: and I am giving him instructions to provide you with the expenses needful for the voyage and the best attention up till your arrival in Hurmuz, where you will give to the Captain of that fortress the packet of letters, which you are carrying for him, inside of which there is another for Don Garcia de Silva, my ambassador, which the said Captain of Hurmuz is to give you in the manner, which I am bidding him do, so that you may pass on with it into Persia, as I order you to do with the greatest speed possible: and for the expenses of the journey whatever is needful will be given you in Hurmuz charged to the account of my household.

"You will go straight to the place in Persia, where the ambassador Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa is, and, giving him my letters, you will inform him of all that has passed in this connection, so that, duly informed, he may go and conclude a peace to be established with the Shah, taking you with him: and I refrain from charging you in greater detail with the good offices which you will have to use in this with him (the Shah) and with the other persons, whom it will be necessary to cause to understand the great amount they have gained, and how useful it will be to them, because I have confidence in you that you will make it fully clear.

"And, if the ambassador should be dead or have left Persia, you will act in that case, according as the Captain of Hurmuz will request you on my behalf, and which I am notifying to him at length.

"Written in Madrid, this 14th March 1619.

"I, the king.

"(Countersigned) The Duke of Villa Hermosa"

Two months later, on 30.5.1619, Fr. Redempt was dead, as already stated.

That Fr. Redempt was entrusted with king Philip's counter-terms to Shah 'Abbas, and not Sir R. Sherley, was due, it may be surmised, (a) to Sherley not returning immediately or direct to Persia, (b) to the Spanish ambassador, Don Garcia, having already left for Persia in advance of the arrival of Sherley and Fr. Redempt at Madrid and to king Philip naturally preferring to leave to him the final conclusion of terms.

The letter of instructions for Don Garcia de Silva, mentioned above, after the death of Fr. Redempt on shipboard was forwarded on from Hurmuz only—as will be read in Pietro della Valle's work—to come to hand after the ambassador had terminated his mission and was on the road back to Hurmuz.

Fruitless of any concrete result as this mission, like all the others sent by 'Abbas I to Europe, would appear to have been—Fr. Redempt dead, the envoy himself an absentee from Persia till 1628—the Shah continued for long to take an interest in its outcome. In his letter to Fr. Benignus in Rome, 3.1.1619,¹ Fr. John Thaddeus wrote of his recent visit to the Shah at Qazwin in August 1618:

"By command of the king I left for the camp as he desired to have more news of the arrival of Fr. Redempt at Madrid, and what he had negotiated with the king of Spain. I told the king that I had not come earlier, because I was awaiting news: that I had left instructions with the Fathers in Isfahan to send the news directly, when received. As I was on my way back to Isfahan in the middle of October on the day before reaching Qazwin there was the courier from Madrid, dispatched by Don Robert (Sherley) with letters from Fr. Redempt. The courier however carried an open note in Persian from the Mihmandar (to the effect) that the packet of letters (in cloth) was not to be handed over unless I were with the Shah."

¹ O.C.D. 237 m.

A message from the Shah bade Fr. John Thaddeus not to bother about going back to his Majesty that winter, but to keep the letters till his arrival—some said it might be on 6.1.1619. How volatile, sometimes casual and unbusinesslike 'Abbas I was in such matters of correspondence over negotiations in Europe, when he went to much trouble in sending envoys, may be gathered from the following quotations from later letters of Fr. John Thaddeus: in a postscript of 28.6.1619, after finishing his letter of 25.5.1619¹ he added that he had been to see the Shah, 15 miles away, taking Fr. Leander, Vicar of Hurmuz, with him, and the post from Madrid with letters from Fr. Redempt and Robert Sherley:

"The king opened the letters and gave them to me to translate into Persian. The Shah 'wondered at so long a time passing without news coming either from the Pope, or our 'Fathers' (i.e. in Rome) 'and asked the reason. I said that it was because his Highness' 'letters will not have got to Rome (yet). The Shah complained at Fr. Redempt being 'detained so long at Madrid, remarking that those who esteemed themselves as most 'obedient to the Pontiff' (the allusion being to the Spanish king) 'served him least well—'why had they detained him' (i.e. at Madrid) 'as he was dispatched to His Holiness. 'This he (the Shah) said, because he had not forgotten his resentment over the mission of 'Jangiz Baig (who went with Fr. Antonio de Gouvea, now Bishop of Cyrene) whom they 'had not allowed to go on from Madrid to Rome. I do not know why Fr. Redempt has 'remained at the Spanish Court two years. If it be on the Shah's business, he was solely 'sent to bear witness that Don Robert (Sherley), both the first time and this, has been' (i.e. genuinely) 'the Shah's ambassador.'

'Abbas I was unable to read his own language, it would appear, let alone European script; but, in contradistinction with the rapidity and summary swiftness in which claims and petitions and charges were dispatched by himself and his ministers, of this absence of any method and inconsequence with which he treated his correspondence with foreign states, and in particular these really important issues with Spain, we get further evidence and confirmation in the extracts from Pietro della Valle appended. After a description² of an audience the Shah had given on 2.8.1619:

"Five days before the king's departure he sent our Fr. Vicar (Provincial) of the Discalced 'Carmelites a large bundle of letters and documents (received) from Europe, to be trans-'lated."

Also, in his letter of 21.10.1619 della Valle has more to say of those dispatches from Madrid and instructions to the ambassador, about which king Philip III had been so precise in March 1619:

"Two days later" (i.e. 16.9.1619) "the Fr. Vicar of the Discalced, one evening in the 'Maidan, when I was present in such a manner as to see and hear everything, presented 'to the king *some letters from Spain, which had come by way of Hurmuz, which the Captain of 'Hurmuz had sent to Isfahan* by a postman³ to Don Garcia, so that the latter might give them 'to the king of Persia. But Don Garcia, who had received them when already on the 'road (back), had sent them on to the Fr. Vicar" (Provincial) "of the Discalced Carmelites, 'begging him to do the duty in his absence. Don Garcia ordinarily confided more in the 'Vicar (Provincial) of the Discalced than in the Portuguese Augustinians, not only because 'the Vicar (Provincial) was better informed about Persian affairs, having been there many 'years and well liked, more than all the others, by the Shah and the Court, but also 'because he was a Spaniard by nationality and a Castilian. . . . On this occasion the 'Fr. Vicar (Provincial) said to the Shah that he was keeping a box, so to speak, of other

¹ O.C.D. 237 m.

² P. della Valle: *Viaggi*, XXI, p. 60.

³ *Un 'uomo a poste* is the term used, as still in England.

"letters from Europe and documents of his Majesty, which had been translated, meaning to hint "that months previously the king had given them to him to translate, and then had never asked "for them again. The Shah, who pays scant heed to them, replied that it did not matter—in "any case it was a box full of lies: the Father objected that he did not tell lies: and the "king answered that he was well aware of that and for that reason trusted him, because "he knew him to be a truthful man. . . ."

Two letters in the Vatican archives (Principi 207. A, pp. 161 and 196) signed "Il Conde "Don Roberto Sherley", show respectively that he was still in Madrid, 22.4.1622—

"my departure from Madrid—to come to kiss the feet of Your Holiness—will take place "within three days and, after embarking on the galleys of Sicily with God's help I shall "land at Civita Vecchia"—

whereas on 5.7.1622 from Florence he wrote briefly to the Pope himself that he hoped shortly to prostrate himself at the feet of His Holiness, and so would not go into details about his 'embassy', but that "the king of Persia, my master, is much inclined to favour the welfare of "Christendom".

But the author of *En Persia* alludes to the way in which he and his 'Countess' were fêted at Florence, without however stating the relative dates, while Fr. Eusebius ab Omn. Sanct. in the MSS. *Hist. Miss.* states that in 1622 Sir R. Sherley reappeared in Rome as ambassador from the Shah, was received with honour by Pope Gregory XV, who on 24.8.1622 issued two Briefs, one permitting him a private oratory in Persia and a portable travelling altar, the other allowing his wife to enter, without remaining the night, enclosed convents of nuns, and to choose a convent in Poland in which to retire in secular clothing, whenever she could no longer accompany her consort, and, lastly, that the Grand Duke of Tuscany honoured Sherley, while the English College in Rome made him a Latin oration.¹ Reference, too, may be made to the copy in the Vatican archives in Misc. Arm. II, 151, headed:

'Report made by Count Sherley, the Englishman, ambassador of the king of Persia to His 'Holiness Pope Gregory XV in the month of August 1622 regarding the League which it is 'under discussion to make between that king and the Christian princes, and the way to 'obtain victory over the Turk, the common enemy.'

The wording of the document below this is, however, identical with that in Fondo Chigi, No. II, 48, p. 327, which is headed:

'A Memorial given to His Holiness Pope Paul V by Robert Sherley, ambassador of the 'king of Persia,'

i.e. the proposals of 1609; and, further, in many phrases and places identical with that found in Fondo Borghese, Ser. IV, 52, p. 324, which is headed:

'Instructions of Anthony Sherley, the Englishman, one of the ambassadors of the king 'of Persia to Pope Clement VIII,'

i.e. the mission of 1600-1: in the absence of other evidence of a revived pressure by 'Abbas I for a league against the Turks in 1622 the presumption is that the heading in Misc. Arm. II, 151, has been added in error by some copyist, and that the proposals do not refer to 1622 at all but to 1609.

Then, under 1623, Fr. Eusebius adds that Robert Sherley was sent on an embassy to

¹ The text of such oration has not been traced in the archives of the College.

Poland and, seeing the Shah's favour to Poles, moved the Praepositus General of the Carmelites to dispatch four Polish Fathers of the Order back with him to Persia: he fell ill while in Poland.

* * * * *

Sir R. Sherley had hardly returned to Persia in 1615 when a new factor came into play which was rapidly to make a vast difference to the virtual monopoly hitherto held by the Religious communities at Isfahan in interpreting Europe to Persia, and Persia to Europe: in November 1614 the East India Company's Council in India decided to dispatch to Persia for the collection of information useful commercially, and to solicit the Shah's licence for ships of the Company to visit ports in his dominions, Messrs. Richard Steel and John Crowther.¹ These two gentlemen reached Isfahan, 14.9.1615, and stayed there 25 days only²—"half of which time was spent in following of Sir Robert Sherley for the Firmanes text . . ."—getting a Farman: the former carried a letter to Sir R. Sherley requesting his assistance to Mr. Steel in his mission. As to this 'farman' copies of it were brought to India by John Crowther. From Isfahan, 9.10.1615, Richard Steel wrote a description of the monies, weights and measures of Persia and native commodities to the Factories of the Company at Agra and Surat before returning to India.

By December 1616 the first "Factors" of the East India Company had "just" landed in Persia: at first they made Jashk on the coast of Makran the base for their ships "whence they "were going to visit a superior governor eight days' journey away."³

Their relations with, or attitude towards, the Portuguese were already hostile, 17.12.1616:

" . . . two days short of Mukhistan Edward Connock, chief of the intended Factory in "Persia, and his council"

were directing the master of their ship to proceed to Gāmbnun, if 'annoyed by the hostility of 'the Portuguese, reported to be preparing to attack the ship':⁴ and a week later the same "Chief in Persia" instructed the master to bring his ship to Kuhistak, ten leagues from Hurmuz. In this letter Mr. Connock expressed his

"hope in another year to settle even in the Portewgal's bosom, in the glorious Port of "Gāmbnun":⁵

and by 15.1.1617 the Factors of the Company were writing from Jashk of the "new settled Factory in Persia".

It would appear⁶ that Sir R. Sherley had retained as an agent of his own in Isfahan a Mr. Robbins, an Englishman: on 17.1.1617 the noted Sir Thos. Roe was writing from India on behalf of the Company to this Mr. Robbins, soliciting his good offices with the Shah to establish the recently commenced trade between England, India and Persia, and giving a sketch of the privileges desired by the Company.

By March 1617 Mr. Connock, who in 1616 had been instructed to proceed from Jashk to Isfahan in company of Mr. Barker, was already residing in Isfahan:⁷ and, 2.4.1617, he wrote

¹ India Office, London: *Factory Records*. Their commission was dated 2.1.1615.

² John Crowther's letter (*vide* No. 453) of 1.3.1616 from Surat states that they left Isfahan to return to India, 17.10.1615, and arrived at Ajmir, 13.3.1616.

³ *Catalogue of Factory Correspondence*, E.I.C., No. 413.

⁴ *Idem*, No. 420

⁵ *Idem*, No. 415.

⁶ *Idem*, No. 434.

⁷ *Idem*, No. 459. Edward Connock arrived in Isfahan, 31.3.1617, and "after some days' hospitality in Isfahan went off to greet the king in his camp". The Augustinian Fathers got into negotiation with Shah 'Abbas, begging that he would not allow the English into Persia, *vide* P. della Valle's chap. XXVI, p. 164. A 'third' English Factor was at Lar writing to Connock, 2.4.1617, about his departure for Shiraz, where after arrival, 2.4.1617, the Daruga of that town supplied them with lodging and provisions.

a memorable report¹ to the Company in India in which he asserted, as regards the dispatch of Sir R. Sherley to Madrid by 'Abbas I, that Sherley

"had instructions to contract with the Spaniards to receive all the silks of Persia, and took
"a grant permitting them to fortify on the Persian coast.² Mr. Connock augurs a great
"increase to the wealth and power of Spain, if this plan of transferring to her all the com-
"merce of Persia were effected. There being no time to receive the instruction of the East
"India Company on the subject, he had taken on himself to endeavour to counteract it.
"He had commenced his opposition by representing to the Shah of Persia the many dangers
"to which he will expose himself, if once he admit the Spaniards to have a footing in his
"country, and that after giving them forts, which they will connect with Hurmuz and
"Goa, he cannot drive them out at pleasure. . . . He" (Mr. Connock) "*intends to propose*
"*to that monarch to take Hurmuz.* Sir R. Sherley was inadequately rewarded by the king
"of Persia on returning from his first embassy and would gladly live in England, had he
"but the means of a poor gentleman. . . ."

Two other noteworthy items of news are set down on 8.5.1617: the Persian Court had already jumped at the opportunity for intrigue and playing off one foreign nation against the other, and (even if, as asserted above, Sherley's instructions did include the conclusion of a monopoly of sale of Persian silk to Spain),

" . . . the king's lieutenant had already offered to the Company silk on credit to the value
"of £100,000 . . .":

secondly,

"the Portugall ambassador" (i.e. Don Garcia de Silva) "arrived at Hurmuz. . . ."

Edward Connock, it should be mentioned here, died about June 1618, for P. della Valle, chap. XXI, p. 369, on 25.7.1618 wrote:

"the Prior of the Augustinian convent, Fr. Melchior, later told us of the death of the
"English Resident,³ Edward Connock, which—there is news—happened on the Persian
"coast near Hurmuz, where he had gone to meet and receive the ships of his nation. And
"his death was confirmed, as a matter of certainty, to have been due to poison. . . ."

Of Mr. Connock's religion an interesting fact is revealed in part of Fr. John Thaddeus' long letter of 3.1.1619:⁴

" . . . Your Reverence asks what Franks there are now in Isfahan. . . . There are
"also some English. . . . The archbishop" (i.e. of Goa) "also writes that in India people
"are scandalized at us for having dealings with the English, who are heretics; but, if they
"knew the manner in which we are having dealings with them, the rather they should be
"edified. I do not say this by reason of the authority and privilege that we hold from His
"Holiness for this, but because of the fruits obtained from it and the hopes we have. . . .
"Several Catholics there are in secret among them: very often, though in secret, they come
"to us for confession and Communion in our church. If they had not this liberty to come
"to our house they might easily be lost and perverted; but, thanks be to the Lord God,
"they are keeping to the Faith and are excellent Catholics.

"Among these English today residing here is one young man of good breeding and fine
"temper, who was nephew to their late ambassador: this young man is a good Catholic,

¹ *Catalogue of Factory Correspondence*, F.I.C., No. 464.

² This seems unlikely to be true after the attack on the fort of Gāmburun.

³ An early instance in Persia of the historic rank and title, 'British Resident'.

⁴ O.C.D. 237 m.

"and does not fail to come to church at the proper times. The ambassador, his late uncle, 'who came to Persia last year and died in this country only a few months after having begun negotiations with the king, used to come, not only to our house, but often to the church with much pleasure, being a Catholic in secret, and moreover our brother by the scapular of the Virgin of Carmel, our Mother and Lady, which he had received in England¹ from our Fr. Simon Stock,² of which he furnished me excellent evidence. The ambassador had a small silver tube, almost round, which he tied to his right arm and in it was our scapular, very small, in silk. When I got to know all this from him I treated him with the loving kindness suited to such a person. . . ."

This is another instance how the old Faith continued to exist in secret among the English in the penal days of James I in men of good position, unsuspected perhaps by their colleagues.

The quotation just given from Fr. John Thaddeus' letters recalls the obligation for anyone writing on the annals of the Carmelites at this period to throw light upon the personality and mentality of the most notable man in the whole history of this Mission from such of his letters as have been preserved: and with that incentive the following extracts are given.

Here he is writing³ to the Praepositus General in Rome about the Nauruz, the vernal equinox—that sun-lit festival with the early blossom gladdening even for Europeans—of 1615: the mobility of this Vicar Provincial will be noted:

"When I came back from Astrakhan I went to the Shah, who was with an army of more than 100,000 men: and all the heads of this army on the 21st March, when they celebrate their New Year, were sitting in the king's tents. He sent for me and bade me sit by his side. There I asked permission of the Shah to speak of the Gospel and, when he gave me permission . . . , I made them an exhortation explaining to them the Ten Commandments in Persian verse, which I had composed. This much pleased the Shah, and he gave orders that the verses should be taken down in writing. . . . For, however learned a Persian may be, and the more I have spoken to and disputed with him in matters of faith, there is none in whom I have not seen a noble change of regard and goodwill toward us: and, although it is true that this race naturally are flatterers and excessively given to adulation, those who have knowledge and are learned in their Quran, when they come to disputations, cease to flatter and talk very freely of what they know. So, in these disputations they give us the opportunity to preach to them, and in this way I am daily preaching to them, and it has even happened to me to deliver three homilies in one day during the largest and most formal receptions at the Court. That few are converted is not so much because they do not know where the truth lies, but because of the sensuality and worldly life which holds them fast bound, just as we see many bad Christians, I mean sinners, who are Catholics by creed, but live in the gravest sins and, notwithstanding they know and admit that, should they die in that state, they would go to hell, still for all that sensuality, interest and worldly life keep fast hold of them. If, therefore, we see this in the Catholic faithful, why should we be surprised at it in Muslim infidels? In fine, not because they do not have themselves baptized have we to abandon the ministry of the preaching of the Gospel. 'Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach': and for this office there are needed workers—Religious who will work at learning the language. *Let him who has no inclination to learn the language not come: for God has no call for him in this country.* We have the example that God did not send the Apostles to preach and that, although Christ had told them: 'Go to all the world' . . . , they did not go

¹ The Carmelite historian of the eighteenth century, Fr. Eusebius, in his *MSS. Hist. Miss.*, chap. XIV, part 2, book 3, gives as one reason why the Order was not disposed to see the convent at Isfahan abandoned in 1613 the fact that they had recently launched out on a missionary enterprise elsewhere, viz. in England.

² This was Fr. Simon Stock of S. Mary, whose family name was Thomas Doughty, *alias* Dawson, born 1574 at Plumley, Lincoln, and who was at the English College, Rome, 1606–10, ordained priest 1610, professed Fland-Belgian province 6.10.1613, sent as first missionary to open Carmelite mission in England, 1615: from 1633–52 lived near Canterbury, where he died, 15.8.1652.

³ Letter of 12.2.1616, O.C.D. 237 m.

"until the Holy Spirit came and gave them the gift of tongues. . . . Whoever would say 'that two or three Religious are sufficient for here deceives himself greatly, because Religious are needed who can keep up a life in community with the regular Observance: and, in order that these Religious may live undisturbed, others are needed to deal with 'things outside, looking after souls and the temporal affairs of the house. Because someone 'is needed to afford satisfaction and give answers to the king and his officials, to listen 'and reply to their enquiries and talk—and to give ear to the Muslims, the Armenians, 'the Georgians, to the Gentile and the Jew, apart from the Christians who come from 'various parts of Europe. . . . How can they' (?) in Rome) 'be convinced that a number 'of Religious insufficient for any place of 300 households is enough for so many states and 'provinces as there are in Persia, and here in Isfahan? . . ."

In a letter of 26.3.1616¹ to Fr. Benignus, sub-Prior of Isfahan then in Rome, Fr. John Thaddeus is on the same theme of the means of approach to the religious soul of the Persian, while giving a glimpse of the position of influence the Carmelites already had won at Court in Isfahan, how they had become a social centre:

"Your Reverence, as one who has himself been here, knows by experience what we 'have to bear; and moreover I am alone, and with so many obligations, relations and 'correspondence which I cannot escape: because, as the Shah esteems us, they all resort 'to us: the day is short for receiving their visits, and replying 'yes' and 'no' to them. There 'is no grandee at this Court, no official of the king with whom we are not on friendly 'terms. In fine, all esteem us and pay us the greatest respect. This proceeds largely from 'this that in the conversations and discussions I constantly have with the Shah and his 'grandeens and ministers I make use of any opportunity offered me to explain the mysteries 'of our Faith. Though it is true that Ricardo in his *Refuting of the Quran* says and well 'remarks that with these infidels the first thing, with which we have to begin, is the Purga- 'tive Way, explaining to them first the reality of their errors and gross ignorance, still by 'experience I find that, in order to illuminate these blind men, it is necessary to show 'them the Illuminative Way and the use of Christian perfection, because, just as those 'who run in the stadium for the prize abstain from worldly things owing to the high value 'they attach to the prize which there is, in spiritual matters by illuminating them in this, 'showing them Christian perfection, they come thence to conceive an esteem for the purity 'of our religion and its ministers. Illuminated by that they see as clearly as the noonday 'the ugliness and contemptibleness of their errors, and become the more disposed to abstain 'from, and divest themselves of these. . . . To this end I am composing various works 'in the Persian language, translating into it the Christian Doctrine, the Gospel, the Psalms 'of David, in which in particular I have taken especial pains, because over this translation 'I have had three Persian Mullas and one Jewish Rabbi, a native of Persia employed: the 'last-mentioned interprets from the Hebrew text, which I correct by the Latin, the two 'Persians go on writing it down: the preface to these psalms I have taken from S. 'Augustine. . . ."

He breaks off to mention some instructive details regarding the convent premises:

"Besides this occupation I have had to put the house of Jesus Mary into shape as a 'convent, with its cloister. . . . The site is situated in a very spacious plain . . . inside it 'passes a water-channel four spans wide, with a constant supply of water flowing to the 'gardens of Allah Virdi Khan and the Chahar Bagh, which lies to the east of it: to the 'west there is Rustam's Castle: on the north Julfa and all Isfahan: to the south the moun- 'tains. It is 800 rods round the boundaries. I have planted a vineyard, which has 25,000 'vines. As fast as can be the walls are being made. All these races of Gentiles and Muslims

¹ O.C.D. 237 m.

"are working with great gusto on them: I did not wish to make use of the Armenians until
 "Khvajeh Nazar and Khvajeh Safar begged me to take them on also for the building. . . ."

Three years later, his letter of 3.1.1619 to Fr. Benignus refers once more to this translation of the Psalms—how he had been to Qazwin¹ and how Shah 'Abbas I had graciously received his offering of the finished translation of the Psalms.² Strange to say, that manuscript today lies in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, No. 3776—through whose hands it passed, how and by what agency it reached England it would be interesting to know fully!

From Qazwin he had followed the Shah to Sultanieh,³ where the camp was, and finally the Carmelite Vicar Provincial reached Ardabil (for the peace with the Turks of 1614 had not long endured—there was once more warfare between the two empires, and the Persians were hard pressed in the district of Ardabil).

"There" (i.e. at Ardabil) "so great was the apprehension because of the Turks and the
 "affliction of that town that the king had thought for nothing but the war, and more war.
 "Those who were fit for fighting were to remain: the others were to flee and save themselves,
 "women, children, servants with their possessions—even to witness this was painful. At
 "that juncture the Shah gave audience to no one; although from his abode he gave direc-
 "tions for everything himself. I did not want to be importunate at such a" (critical)
 "time, but only that he should know and see that I was there. So, on the few occasions
 "when he came out and I greeted him, he showed himself well disposed. I was awaiting
 "a better opportunity when a letter from Fr. Dimas came saying that the Fathers in Isfahan
 "were unanimously of opinion that I was wasting time. This reached me on 14.9.1618,
 "Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, and disturbed me: the question was how to get leave
 "to depart from the Shah, for at that time he had 100,000 Turks opposed to him, one
 "day's march from Ardabil: and it was extremely difficult to get speech with him. . . ."

Through the Daruga of Isfahan, a great favourite with the Shah, Fr. John Thaddeus eventually succeeded in getting the injunction he sought against anyone making difficulties for the Convent over the premises and the graveyard, about which he had already spoken to the Shah: he left Ardabil, 10.10.1618, and a few days afterwards arrived in Isfahan (28.10.1618): news came that the Shah was proceeding to Mazandaran,⁴ and would not be in Isfahan till Epiphany of 1619.

(From the material left by the Carmelites during the reign of 'Abbas I a considerable amount of evidence as to that monarch's movements is to be had: it is noteworthy that even privileged Europeans after visiting his Majesty in his camps or other towns would obtain his permission to leave before returning to Isfahan.)

The long report by Fr. John Thaddeus, dated 3.1.1619,⁵ has been quoted at length in regard to the financial position of the convent of Isfahan (this already having become difficult) in the section of this work dealing with the government and finance of the Mission, and also with regard to the lack of title for the occupation of the convent premises. Among the many arresting word pictures he paints, the following at least, even at the cost of repetition, deserves quotation here—how

"the house, previously regarded as a stable for camels, is now known as a decent place

¹ Accompanied by Abdullah Gioerida, eldest brother of della Valle's wife, says Fr. Eusebius in *Hist. Miss.*, chap. XXI, book 3, part 2

² This was on 18.6.1618 (see farther on) "the same day received cordially by the Shah on the Maidan of Qazwin without ceremony, on business for his Order" (*vide* della Valle's letter of 22.4.1619).

³ The Shah had been in Georgia from February 1617 to the end of that year, it would seem from "P. della Valle having wasted nearly all 1617 in Isfahan for the Shah to return from Georgia" (*vide* Fr. Eusebius in *MSS. Hist. Miss.*, quoted above).

⁴ *MSS. Hist. Miss.*, chap. XXVII, book 3, part 2, states that 'Abbas I's troops gained an unexpected victory over the Turks one day's march from Tabriz, and on 20.10.1618 the latter sent in an envoy to sue for a truce. At Sultanieh Imam Quli Khan of Shiraz had also been visited by Fr. John Thaddeus and della Valle.

⁵ O.C.D. 237 m.

"and 'the House of God and of Jesus Mary' written in large gilt letters, Latin above, 'Persian below, over it so that Muslims passing in the street and reading the names of 'Jesus Mary often make signs of respect in its direction."

From the biographical portion of this work too it is to the point to repeat here the energetic defence he had to offer against criticism, which had evidently been written from Rome, of the missionaries living too much in touch with king and people, insufficiently in cloistered retirement:

"They tell us to live retired in our cells and to look to ourselves, avoiding conversation 'with seculars, and particularly to abstain from going to see the king. O good God! how 'is it possible to put such things into practice, in themselves contrary to the mind of the 'holy Pontiff who send us here? The Pontiff orders us not to see to ourselves only, but 'much to the salvation of our neighbours, not of secular Christians and Catholics alone, 'but also of schismatics, heretics, infidels.

"Next, as to the king, let our Fathers read the Briefs of His Holiness with which we 'were sent, and they will find that in them the Pontiff chiefly introduces us to the Shah, 'begs him to give us access to his person, to hear and to favour us—a very evident sign of 'the intention of His Holiness—not that we should run away from him, but frequent him, 'considering sagely that on the king depends all the kingdom, and at least to be in his 'good graces. Further in this connection regard has to be had to the usage of these parts, 'and to the king's character. There is no one at all of any note in this realm whom he 'does not want to have by him frequently. How much more is it not to be believed that 'he takes pleasure in being visited and paid court to by foreigners suspect both to him 'and to those of his religion as we are and persons sent him by the Sovereign Pontiff? 'That this is true is confirmed by the words of the king, who said to me, when some months 'ago I went to pay him my respects at Qazwin; then after I had kissed his hand the very 'first thing he said to me was that I had been a long time in going to see him. . . . But 'my reason for going to the Court was not for such a purpose, but . . . and to present 'to him the book of the Psalms translated by me into Persian, together with the Gospels 'in Arabic, which were accepted by the king with the greatest pleasure and deepest 'reverence. It is not to be despised that I should introduce this custom of presenting books 'to the king about our religion and that they should be graciously accepted by him because, 'with the precedent a door is opened for doing the like in future not only as regards royalties, 'but for distributing books among all the rest, in order to disseminate the word of God and 'the tenets of our Faith without them noticing it. . . .

" . . . Together with the above-mentioned books I have also presented to the king an 'alphabet in Arabic, and acquainted him with the printing of Arabic and Persian letters, 'about which he showed much interest and expressed a wish to introduce it into his own 'country.¹ If we could have one" (set of type) "and introduce it here, it would be of 'great advantage to our Religion and the spreading of it: the Shah has even charged me 'to procure it; so that my visit to his Majesty was not a fruitless one. . . ."

A powerful, even crushing, answer to critics, with all the force of experience of a mission behind it—for how could one sent to evangelize in an oriental land live retired from any connection with the world!

The attitude towards the Armenians of a personality with so much influence as Fr. John Thaddeus gained in Isfahan also calls for attention in the light of the deviation of the

¹ *Vide* P. della Valle's, XIV, p. 425, under date 8.5.1619, referring to 18.6.1618:

"The Shah at once summoned the Fr. Vicar of the Carmelites, bidding him bring the book of the Psalms, translated 'into Persian. He did so, and also brought a book of the Gospels printed in Arabic and an Arabic alphabet printed 'by Raimondo, in order to let him ('Abbas) see the manner of printing, with the letters enlarged four times" (i.e. natural size). "The Shah took great pleasure in those things and displayed great desire to have a type with Persian and Arabic 'letters. And he commissioned the Father to procure them for him by any manner of means from Rome."

aim, and field of activity subsequently taken by the Mission. That same report of 3.1.1619 observes:

"... As to the Armenians of Julfa I will tell your Reverence that I am not keen on 'sending for them: and it does not seem well for us to do so. The reason on which I base 'my view is that the more simple folk among them, in that crass ignorance and good faith 'in which they live, may easily win salvation: and, as for those who are more instructed, 'I do not find them so far separated (from us) as some think but, on the contrary, that 'almost all are staunch in recognizing and confessing the primacy of the Roman Church 'and the obedience due to the Sovereign Pontiff, which are the principal points. It is 'true that in their rites and observances they hold to and retain many abuses and errors, 'born among them more through ignorance and negligence on the part of their own priests 'and the want of sound teaching than out of ill-will, and these errors, although inveterate, 'with a little time can be gradually extirpated. . . ."

The oriental Christians who formed the flock for the Carmelites in Isfahan city were, he tells us:

"... The people who come to our church, besides our few Franks, are Syrians, Armenians, Georgians, Arabs—and Chaldaeans particularly since the marriage of Pietro della 'Valle. . . ."

This mention of that celebrated and pleasant writer, with such gifts for oriental tongues and accurate observation, calls for some notes regarding his career and other matters, which come from the Carmelite archives:

'He came,' wrote Antonio Vittorelli, 'of a distinguished family, which had numbered 'in former times Rustico de' Rustici, created cardinal by Pope Honorius III, and Andrea 'della Valle, created cardinal and made protector of the Franciscans by Pope Leo X. 'Born at Rome 22.4.1586 to Pompeo della Valle and Giovanna Albertini, as a young man 'in his grief at a disappointed love he had gone to Naples and thence set out for the Holy 'Land. Later in Baghdad' (about 1616) 'he married Ma'ani Gioerida, an "Assyrian" i.e. 'Chaldaean, who had been born at Mardin. His *Journeys* bear vivid testimony to the 'love he bore for this companion of his years in Persia: and, when she died after childbirth 'wasted with fever at Minab on the shores of the Persian Gulf, 30.12.1621, at the age of 22, 'he had her body embalmed and, in circumstances of great difficulty, transported it in a 'coffin with him through perilous sojourns in India and Mesopotamia, until on reaching 'Rome he was able to deposit it in his family vault under the chapel of S. Paul' ('our "'chapel," he calls it) 'in the ancient church of Ara Coeli in the Campidoglio, to the right 'of the altar, 25.7.1626.

'After his long wanderings he had returned to Rome, 28.3.1626: and on 8.4.1626 he 'was received in audience by Pope Urban VIII, to whom he represented the religious 'condition of the Georgians which, eagerly taken up by the Pope, resulted in the decision, '4.5.1626, to dispatch a mission of Theatine Fathers to wean that race over to reunion 'with Rome. He was made a Chamberlain of the Cape and Sword. Later Pietro della 'Valle, remarried to a Georgian girl whose father had been killed in the war with Shah 'Abbas, and who had been carried into captivity to Isfahan, where Pietro and Ma'ani, 'to save her, adopted her, changed her name from Tinatin to Maria, and took her with 'them on their travels. Pietro had fourteen children by her, but of the four sons who came 'to manhood there were no descendants. Four daughters took the veil: one was married 'in Rieti, the eldest into the noble family of Bufalo in Rome.

'It is recorded that in later years Pietro had to escape to Palliano and thence to Naples 'in order to save his life, because he gave a buffet to a servant of the palace in the square

'of S. Peter's and put his hand to his sword, while the Pope was giving Benediction—a 'capital offence. However, the act was pardoned, and he died at Rome, 20.4.1652.'

Like many others, no doubt, the compiler has explored the 'Ara Coeli' church for a memorial. Though in his book Pietro called it "chapel of S. Paul", it is now the chapel of the Ascension, fourth on the left, which is indicated to visitors. Outside the metal grille there are several tablets on the wall to members of the family of the Marchesi Bufalo della Valle of the 19th century: inside on the gospel side in the wall is an effigy recumbent, with an inscription below to Philip de Valle, 1463, and on the epistle side others to a Pietro of the 16th century, ecclesiastics and others. In the sacristy is a copy of the book of 1736¹ by Fr. Casimir O.F.M. entitled, *Memoria Storica della Chiesa e Convento di S. Maria in Ara Coeli*, which under the account of the inscriptions, etc., then existing in the chapel of the Ascension states in Italian:

"Lastly it should be known that in this chapel there was buried without any record the 'famous Pietro della Valle, who died the 20th day of April 1652, whence in vain people 'from across the mountains and other foreigners resort here daily in order to look at his 'tomb and read his epitaph. . . ."

Pietro della Valle reached Isfahan from Baghdad, 22.2.1617; having waited in Isfahan for the Shah's return from Georgia nearly all 1617, in January 1618 he set off to find the monarch at Farrahabad in Mazandaran.² Among the literary and antiquarian treasures possessed by the Carmelite Order is a short attestation and signature in the writing of Pietro della Valle, which, strangely enough, concern a Scotsman in Persia: a photographic reproduction of this document is given in this work. It is preceded by a declaration, dated 26.9.1621, by Fr. Vincent of S. Francis, Visitor General in Persia and East India and Prior of the convent of S. Paul for the missions in Rome, to the effect that he had received from

'Mr. George Strachan, a Scottish gentleman, a coffer, in which were books in Arabic, 'Persian and Turkish, some 61 in number, listed according to a catalogue, together with 'all the books which he (Fr. Vincent) was to recover in the city of Aleppo there lying in 'the name of Mr. George Strachan, and promised to take them with him to Rome, expenses 'being paid by the Carmelite Order, and that he will guard and keep them safe and sound 'in the convent of S. Paul of the Discalced Carmelites until the arrival of the said Mr. 'George Strachan and then, as soon as Mr. George Strachan reached the City, would 'return them to him, when the expenses incurred in their transport had been repaid to 'the Carmelite Order: all this without any responsibility and, if anything should happen 'to the books (which God forbid) he, Fr. Vincent, was not bound to pay any compensation.'

Separately, Mr. George Strachan made a last will and testament, bequeathing these books to the said convent of the Carmelites in Rome in the case of his death on his journey back to Europe, asking in return Masses and prayers for his soul:

"Ego, Georgius Strachanus Merniensis Scotus, declaro hanc meam esse voluntatem ut 'cum simus omnes mortales, si Deus in hoc meo itinere de me aliquid disposuerit nimirum 'eo modo quo possum sponte et libera voluntate dono et in elemosinam pie trado praedictos 'libros omnes conventui missionis S. Pauli Carmelitanorum Discalceatorum de Urbe ut 'patres et Religiosi illius conventus orent in suis sacrificiis orationibus et penitentiis 'pro anima mea a peccatis meis expianda, et haec est mea ultima voluntas, facta 'Spahani 26 mensis septembris ano Dni 1621. Ego Georgius Strachanus affirmo quae 'supra."

Pietro della Valle attested:

¹ i.e. Barely 80 years after Pietro's death.

² Vide MSS. Hist. Miss., chap. XXI, book 3, part 2.

"Ego, Petrus de Valle *Peregrinus*, testor hanc ultimam voluntatem esse scriptam manu "et caractere praedicti Domini Georgii Strachani: hominem ejus scripturamque optime "novi. Spahani, die 26 Sept. 1621. Petrus de Valle *Peregrinus*."

(I, Pietro della Valle, the Pilgrim, testify that this last will is written in the handwriting of the said Mr. George Strachan; the man and his writing I have known very well—Isfahan, 6.9.1621.)

It would be interesting to trace the identity of this Scottish orientalist, and still more to know what became of his collection of oriental manuscripts. The family of Strachan took its name from the lands in the NW. of the *Mearns*, the old name for Kincardineshire (hence George calls himself 'Merniensis'). Sir Alexander Strachan of Monboddo and Thornton, a commissioner of the exchequer, was created a baronet of Nova Scotia by king Charles I in 1625; but there were other branches of the family in the Mearns, in Angus, in Edinburgh and Aberdeen. To this Scottish gentleman there are several brief references in letters, e.g.:

"The Fathers have an 'Englishman' as their teacher of Arabic—a good Catholic who "had studied in Rome—reading for two hours daily, and having conversation one hour" (Fr. Prosper, 27.8.1621).

"A Scottish gentleman is teaching us Arabic" (Fr. Prosper, 27.9.1621).

"Although we have not the funds for our food I did not wish to miss the opportunity of" (profiting by) "a man eminent in Hebrew, Greek, Chaldaean, and Arabic, and he sent off "his books by the Fr. Visitor. . . . I have arranged with him for the six months he will "be here that the Fathers will assist him to make his journey by paying him 50 scudi. . . ." (*idem*).

Early in 1619 the Vicar Provincial, Fr. John Thaddeus, summoned a congress of missionaries at Isfahan: all Fathers present drew up and signed a representation to the Definitory General in Rome of the needs of the Mission financially and in numbers, and this was sent through Fr. Redempt: della Valle mentions how he had gone out to meet the Vicar of Hurmuz, Fr. Leander, on 3.3.1619: the views of the Vicar Provincial have been learnt from his letter of January of that year, already quoted above. To round about this year refers also an undated note (in Spanish by Fr. John Thaddeus, from its context written in 1621) in the archives of the Order: that from lower Luristan, or more properly upper Khuzistan, seekers after the Christian religion should come will cause surprise to those who knew that region in more recent times:

"There are many people in Luristan ready to become Christians, but they say that it "cannot be done from Isfahan, but only on the spot in their own country: and that they "want to have Fathers with them. The Kalantar who is administrator" ('regidor') "of "all Luristan . . . of Shushtar, Ramuz" (i.e. Ramhurmuz) "and Shush . . . his ancestors "and his family have held the governorship of that province since the time of Alexander "the Great according to the ancient tradition they have. They are a bellicose people. "Finally this Kalantar dispatched various persons, and more recently his son, Rustam "Baig by name, to Fr. John Thaddeus, begging the latter to visit them and to send Religious "to them.¹ As we did not have Religious to send, none have been dispatched, nor has "the Father been able to go on a visit there, because of his being till now Superior here " . . . now that he is no longer holding office, he is ready to go there and do whatever "obedience" (to superiors) "will bid him do. . . ."

Only a few months previously, 31.12.1618, Fr. Dimas of the Cross, an Italian Religious who had arrived in the mission at the end of 1616 and was to prove one of its mainstays through

¹ *Vide* P. della Valle's letter, 21.10.1619: "On 14.9.1619 Fr. John Thaddeus baptized Jalal, servant (of della Valle) and native of the province of *Susana*, by the name of Khatchatur."

Ego Georgius Strachanus Melvitaris Socius ...
Simus omnes mortales, si Deus in hoc meo itinere, de me aliquid disposuerit, mirum eo modo
quo possum, sponte et libera voluntate donec et in Elmslinam per strada predictos libros omnes
Comitatus missionis S. Pauli Carmelitanae disratorum, de Vobis ut patet et Holgus. Minus
Contentus evadit in suis sacrificiis, orationibus et penitentibus pro anima mea a peccatis meis sepanda
Et hoc est mea ultima voluntas. Facta. Spahani 26. mensis Septembris. anno Dni 1621.
"Ego Georgius Strachanus affirmo quae supra."

Pietro Della Valle Peregrino, per hanc domum voluntariam esse missam meam ad
charitatem predictam S. Pauli Strachani pro honore, cuius missionem quare non
habetis et 26 Septembris 1621. Pietro Della Valle Peregrino

AUTOGRAPHED ENDORSEMENT BY THE CELEBRATED TRAVELLER AND WRITER,
PIETRO DELLA VALLE, "IL PELLEGRINO", TO AN ASSIGNMENT BY MR. GEORGE
STRACHAN OF THE MEARN, SCOTLAND

Dated Isfahan 26.9.1621, of his oriental 'books' to the Carmelites for conveyance to Europe
(In the archives of the Order, Rome)

the coming twenty years, a man who assimilated well with the Orient and its languages, particularly Armenian, had petitioned through the Procurator of the missions in Rome for permission to say Mass in Armenian, all the other Fathers agreeing as to the value of such a concession. He proposed to say Mass sometimes in their churches at Julfa, seeing that the Armenians said only one daily: his idea was that by being present at, and getting accustomed to the Western rite, the schismatics would gradually drop the abuses in their own sacrifice and ceremonies, and a spiritual contact would thus be established. For—still at that period—he could report the attitude of the schismatic Armenians towards Latin Religious was one of cordiality and reverence: not only the common folk, but also the notables would ask for the blessing of the Carmelites and showed more respect for them than for their own Patriarch, often bringing their sick for the prayers of the missionaries to be said over them. Indeed it was the opinion of Fr. Dimas that, had the Carmelite Religious arrived earlier in the country and learnt the four languages facilitating communication, i.e. Armenian, Chaldaean, Georgian and Persian,

“the state of those subject races would not have become so desperate, nor would they have fallen a prey to the Muhammadan wolves—we have arrived too late to save many. . . .
“People come to ask for baptism, and there is no one to instruct them.”

So he too had begged Rome for more Religious.

After their invasion of Azarbaijan, 'Abbas I had made a truce with the Turks towards the end of 1618 and was back in Isfahan by June 1619,¹ when Fr. Dimas mentions that the undefined position in which the monarch had left their occupation of the premises he had put at their disposal and his changeable moods were still causing trouble to the Mission:

“As regards the vineyard . . . some days ago, when 'Ali Baig was here, the Shah had part of it ploughed up and part of it used . . . these games occur frequently and now we hope to know what his wish really is—he has never declared it to us, save that once he told Fr. John Thaddeus that he could buy premises, if that Religious so desired. He (the Shah) is at present in Isfahan and has shown himself very affable to Fr. John Thaddeus. . . .”

But by far the most striking event of 1619 was the arrival—at long last—in the capital of the special ambassador from king Philip III of Spain, Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa. Of this event and the proceedings of his mission, in addition to the *Comentarios* of Don Garcia himself (published by the Sociedad de Bibliófilos Espanoles, Madrid, 1903-5, 2 vols.),² the *Viaggi* of P. della Valle, and *En Persia* of Fr. Florencio, vol. III, pp. 106-13, and the historian of the Carmelites, Fr. Eusebius, furnish sufficient detail to give a fairly accurate impression.

When Don Garcia de Silva reached Hurmuz on 8.5.1617,³ the Shah, as can be verified from preceding extracts from letters, was at the front in Azarbaijan, where he remained until the end of 1618. Quoting an anonymous narrative in the Carmelite archives, *En Persia* relates:

“the winter” (i.e. of 1617-8) “the ambassador passed in a town called Shiraz, 130 leagues from Hurmuz—the Governor lodged him in a very sumptuous palace of his with a garden close to the town, and there provided the ambassador with all his requirements in a very liberal and handsome manner, entertaining him at many banquets. . . . Here he received an intimation from the Shah that in order to honour the envoy extraordinary that monarch had quitted the camp of his army at Sultanich and was awaiting him at

¹ Letter of 27.6.1619, O.C.D. 237 b.

² This has not, however, been available for consultation by the compiler of the present work. The author of *En Persia* points to the use of them made in the *Bulletin of the Royal Academy of History*, Madrid, vol. 92, pp. 497-510, April-June 1928.

³ Vide No. 476 of catalogue of original correspondence, *List of Factory Records*, East India Company, at India Office.

"Qazwin, the former capital. The Spanish ambassador was some 27 days on the road before halting, 15.6.1618, in a village two leagues south of Qazwin, where Shah 'Abbas was awaiting him.

"On the following day" (16.6.1618) "as it grew light, he began to send off his camels, very many in number, and the rest of his gear and effects, which were considerable, so that all the caravan of various quadrupeds numbered more than 500, and up to nightfall these were still entering the town, but by a different road and gate from that about to be followed by Don Garcia.

"At two in the afternoon of that day the ambassador quitted that village, after having given to all his servants two very rich liveries, the one of mulberry-coloured velvet with silver and gold embroidery in which they entered the town that day: the other for the day when the gifts were to be presented of green velvet worked with very rich embroidery, which made a very pleasant sight.

"He gave them all gold chains of great value, without a single man lacking one, and very rich plumes. . . . He took with him 8 pages, 8 lackeys, a master of the horse, steward, a chaplain and one Augustinian Father, together with all the other attendants a Grandee (of Spain) can have—all mounted, with a litter going in front after the Spanish fashion, borne between two camels and very richly appointed, in which the ambassador journeyed at night, and a palanquin, too, in the Indian style carried on the shoulders of men.

"There were 500 mounted men. The ambassador rode a splendid horse, and was very richly attired in a suit of faded rose colour, with a gold chain and the band of his hat made of diamonds, which seemed like stars among the plume.

"Half a league before the town was reached by order of the Shah all the nobles of his Court and his chief Mihmandar, all mounted . . . with plumes in the Persian fashion . . . accompanied by other mounted men of the Court, in all some 400, without counting a very large number of people on horseback and on foot, who went outside the town to see the ambassador. . . . The governor of the town had commanded by public crier that all those who were not busy should go out to the *istigbal*, and thus there was such a concourse. The nobles saluted the ambassador, and the Mihmandar gave him welcome on behalf of the Shah who, he said, was expecting him with great pleasure and longing for his arrival. He was lodged in the largest house in the town" (of Qazwin) "which belonged to an agent of the Shah. . . . On the morrow, at 8 in the morning the Mihmandar came from the Shah to say that the latter was awaiting him, and so he went to the palace with all his servants in their rich liveries, he himself being richly clothed and having the letter of credence from our lord the king" (of Spain) "inserted in the hat-band of his hat.

"The ambassador arrived with all his people and servants at the king's palace, and entered by a gilded gate . . . into a large garden: on the one side and the other an avenue of white poplars and plane-trees, water flowing on either hand; and, after he had reached the beginning of this avenue, the ambassador dismounted from his horse with all his company and, having followed up an alley on one side for some forty paces, saw 50 paces away from him and issuing from a fine arbour¹ the Shah, who came towards the ambassador alone, dressed in a coloured *qaba*², a green turban, with plumes in the Persian fashion, which ordinarily are two or three of the best feathers of the crane mounted in a gold brooch and ornamented with some stone, beautiful to behold.

"The Shah continued to come on more than 35 paces before reaching the ambassador. The latter bent his knee and kissed his Majesty's hand: the Shah raised him, embraced him and, putting his face near that of the ambassador, with a pleasing expression said: "Welcome a thousand times!" And, saying this, he placed him on his right hand and

¹ *Zenadero*—a word not to be found in the dictionary.

² *Cabava* is the Spanish form here given: it is the outer long garment folding in front and fastened with the girdle or shawl.

"took him into the arbour, which had in the midst of it a fountain which spurted out the water very high. In this arbour there were some cushions of silk and gold worked on the one side, and there the king sat down and bade the ambassador, who still wore his hat, sit on his right close to him.

"The Shah said to him: 'How is my brother, the king of Spain?' Each time he spoke or replied the ambassador took off his hat, replacing it as he finished. He gave him (the Shah) the letter of credence from our lord the king, and the Shah took it and put off his turban: he received the letter with great satisfaction, touching his breast with it as a token of affection and goodwill. Then he placed it in the bosom of his *qaba*, or garment. Next the Shah began to ask many questions of the ambassador, to which the latter replied sagaciously and discreetly, as befitted a man so judicious and well trained: he asked him (the ambassador) about Spanish affairs, especially military matters, in which he ('Abbas I) takes such interest—for all his talk is about nothing else. Then the Shah asked him to give from memory an account of those victories which our lord the king has won against the Turk: and this the ambassador gave him in great detail and accurately, at which the Shah was much pleased. He" ('Abbas I) "remarked that he had felt it acutely that the Emperor should have made peace with the Turks and the king of France, Venice, etc.: and he asked why they did not join with him" (the king of Spain) "and wage war on the Turks, each on his front, saying that for his part he would not fail—that he was not afraid of the Turks as the Christians were: and that all his father had lost and that had been taken from him by the Turks during twenty years he had won back in 6 months, and captured from them more than 100 towns.¹

"The ambassador returned him sensible answers, and his conversation and deportment pleased the Shah greatly. His Majesty gave him lunch and paid him many compliments. At the beginning of the meal the Shah gave the ambassador the toast of the health of our lord the king" (of Spain) "lifting up his turban,² while the ambassador took off his hat and remained standing until the Shah had finished.

"Large as it was, all around the portico were golden carafes full of wine; some with water were very large, such as in our country of Spain are used for putting in the snow, to ice water: they are very heavy; and the glasses from which one drinks are as it were oval, boat-shaped vessels, very heavy and shallow: silverware is not used in the table service.

"After the meal the ambassador asked permission to retire and took his leave. Granting it, the Shah accompanied him until he had set him in the avenue already mentioned and, being very pleased with the prudence and discretion of the ambassador, gave instructions for the gifts to be brought on the following day.

"So in the morning the Shah sent the Mihmandar to enquire how many men would be necessary to carry the gifts, which were to be borne by the servants of the Shah, as he desired to pay this compliment to the king of Spain: for among the Persians this is a novelty highly appreciated, and it is the custom for each person to carry one thing in his hand: and so in procession, one behind the other, they bear the gifts. The Mihmandar saw that 400 men would be needed, and so he took them from the Shah's household, taking pages, and favourite minions, and all the rest of the palace staff up to the number named to the ambassador's house, where he drew them up in order and handed to each person one article. The one who marched in front of all carried the sword, wearing which our lord king Philip was married.

"Next there were 22 chains of gold, very richly worked, and with jewels, mostly emeralds, in each, every man carrying two in his hands, one behind the other. . . . Then another person with golden salvers, hooped with precious stones of inestimable worth, the number of which I do not know. After that a silver brazier, very large, which eight men bore

¹ At this time there was a truce, it may be noted, between 'Abbas I and the Turks.

² *Toca* is presumably a 'turban' here. In modern Persia, up to 1920 that is to say, it would have been the reverse of a compliment to lift off your turban or any headdress.

"on their shoulders: it was finely worked and very beautiful. Then a small chest, heavily "gilt, in which his Majesty sent him a complete table service for the road in silver, containing even candlesticks, etc. Each man carried two articles in his hand from the gilt "chest in which the service was kept. Next, another small coffer with articles made of "iron and steel such as knives, pincers, small hammers, files, etc., of all sorts: and, as the "Shah is always busy making bows for warfare, some plaster rings to be worn on the thumb "of the left hand when drawing the bow: as it is here found all ready-made, it is much "prized.

"Then behind this there came a great glass coffer, richly worked, with golden pillars "between each sheet of glass: this the king of Persia had sent to Italy to a private subject "of his (to have made), and it had been so badly made that, after it was finished, it was "mortgaged in Milan for 5,000 or 6,000 ducats and so remained for several years. Our "lord king, Philip III, learning of this, ordered it to be got out of pawn and sent as a "present to the Shah of Persia. The latter was highly grateful for this compliment from "the king of Spain and took great pleasure in this coffer as being so costly and unique an "object. It was carried by eight men.

"Last of all, after that, there were brought many pieces of crimson cloth and velvets, "steel helmets, very fine arquebuses, richly tooled and gilded, and some lances: and behind "them a great mastiff, which the ambassador gave the Shah, who thought much of it: "and besides there were 30 camels laden with pepper and spices which his Catholic Majesty "had ordered to be taken from India and which would be worth a large sum of money "to the Persian monarch.

"So the procession passed through the middle of the town and the square, with the "ambassador and his servants richly attired in front, as far as the king's palace: then, "passing by a large courtyard with a very fine gate they entered a garden, on one side of "which there were some verandas in which were the Shah and his nobles, and on the "other side there was a tower, all lattices, in which were the Shah's women. When the "ambassador arrived he was invited to sit down, while the presents were carried on in "front of the Shah, and then passed on into some inner corridors and rooms, where they "were kept.¹

"Together with the other persons the Shah paid great attention to everything: it seemed "as if his eyes were starting from his head; and, when the crystal coffer arrived in front "of him, he gave a sigh and looked up to heaven, as if thanking God at seeing that article "he had so much desired. Then, when the arquebuses and muskets arrived, he called "for one to inspect it (the one which he noticed to be the largest) and showed signs of "great satisfaction at seeing it.

"It was half-past eleven o'clock by the time this was finished, and the Shah ordered "lunch to be brought and invited the ambassador to it, summoning also a Discalced "Carmelite Father, named Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Elisaeus, of the convent they have in "Isfahan, saying that he was to bring a book of the Psalms in the Persian tongue. When "the Father in question had come in front of the ambassador he presented the book, which "the Shah kissed and held over his head, saying that he greatly prized it, and that whoever "did not believe what was written therein was an infidel and insulted God. On this day "the Father in question served as interpreter and ate with the king and the ambassador: "and the Shah displayed much piety, saying so many things and with such emotion about "the immortality of the soul and death that at times they saw him shed tears—which "caused much consternation to the ambassador and the Father in question, who said "various suitable things much to the point in answer. Afterwards I heard the ambassador "and the Father remark that a Christian, very well instructed, could not say the things "he (the Shah) then said in favour of our Faith, and that either he (?Abbas I) was the

¹ The total value of these presents was estimated at 100,000 ducats at the time (*vide* Don Luis Cabrera de Cordoba): one wonders what became of these *objets de vertu* in the course of the next three centuries—were all looted by the Afghans, or are some in the palace museum formed by the Qajar dynasty?

"most deceitful man in the world, or else a man whom God had predestined to become
"a Christian."¹

That is the scene described by the anonymous Religious, author of the narrative preserved in the Carmelite archives, acquaintance with which the present compiler owes to Fr. Florencio del Niño Jesus and his *En Persia*.² The *Comentarios* of Don Garcia (vol. II, p. 101), it would appear from *En Persia*, mention this incident arising thus:

"While there was discussion on the subject the Shah sent to call . . . Fr. John Thaddeus
". . . who two or three days after the ambassador's arrival had also come to Qazwin. . . .
"The reason for the coming of this Religious had been to bring him (the Shah) the Psalms
"of David and the New Testament written in the Persian tongue and very well bound
"in two volumes, which up till then he had not given him ('Abbas I), although he had
"endeavoured to do so through the intermediary of Husain Baig and the secretary of State,
"Aqa Mir. . . ."

After the exchange of ceremonial visits³

"the Shah told the ambassador that he was leaving for the war and directed him to go to
"Isfahan and wait for him, saying that he would return within four months to settle his
"business, and instructed Fr. John to accompany him. The king departed for Sultanieh,
"and the ambassador the next day.

"The Shah is taking with him 25,000 arquebusiers and 80,000 men mounted, archers
"and lancers." (This expedition was that to crush the revolt, or conspiracy, in Georgia
already mentioned.)

It was, however, far longer than four months and well into 1619 before 'Abbas I, having made a truce with the Turks on the Azarbaijan front and subsequently visited Mazandaran, returned to Isfahan. Then, in the intervals of staying in his military camps at a distance from the capital, he appears to have ignored and played with the Spanish ambassador, procrastinating in affording him the audience for which the latter asked in order to set out verbally to the Shah the official business, for which he had been dispatched to Persia. Frs. John Thaddeus and Leander in June 1619 had been to see the monarch 15 leagues from Isfahan:⁴ it was plain to them that he no longer cared for the friendship of the king of Spain. Suddenly,

¹ *En Persia* quotes the *Comentarios* of Don Garcia himself in confirmation--a third testimony to this exhibition by 'Abbas I:

" . . . till the friar arrived with his book, which he (the Shah) then opened and kissed with as much appearance of
"devotion, as if he were the most devout and penitent Capuchin in Europe, even shedding many tears. But this, which
"to all those who do not know the inner self of this king, might appear an act to be applauded and praised, the ambassa-
"dor judged in him ('Abbas) to be a thing in every way detestable, disclosing by it a character full of deceitfulness and
"evil pretence"

² There is, however, a contradiction of date which needs to be put right. *En Persia*, p. 107, in the account as reproduced above, makes the Spanish ambassador reach Qazwin "15th June 1619", and therefore the delivery of the presents take place on the 18th or 19th June 1619, as also the presentation of this book of the Psalms. The year should be 1618, for (a) Fr. John Thaddeus' two letters dated 3.1.1619 (in O.C.D. 237 m.), mentioning how he had been to Qazwin and how the Shah had received the book of the Psalms, show that this took place in June 1618; (b) the anonymous writer and manuscript quoted by *En Persia* refer to the "coming year 1619", vide footnote on p. 106; (c) P. della Valle in his letter of 22.4.1619 wrote "on the 19th June the Vicar General of the Carmelites arrived in Qazwin", which must refer to the previous year, 1618. Then, in his letter of 8.5.1619, P. della Valle relates how the Shah "sent to call Fr. John Thaddeus to bring the
"book of the Psalms translated into Persian: and he did so and besides brought also a book of the Gospels printed
"in Arabic. . . . But returning to what I was relating about the Gospels and the Psalms, as being things approved by
"his religion, the king received them with the greatest reverence, kissed them, put them on the top of his head, ordered
"that they should be kept in his wardrobe . . . and said clearly that whoever did not believe in those books was an
"infidel. On that occasion the Shah being a man who knows how to do everything, began to discourse on spiritual
"matters, particularly death and the vanities of the world, and here, according to the Fr. Vicar, who related it to me,
"he preached, became affected and wept, and in short the audience passed in such a way that the Spanish ambassador
"either had no opportunity to speak about his business or, if he had, did not wish to do so in the presence of Fr.
"John. . . ."

³ *En Persia*, p. 112, quoting the anonymous manuscript in the archives, O.C.D.

⁴ Letter of Fr. John Thaddeus, 28.6.1619, O.C.D. 237 m.

he returned to his capital:¹ he was back there by 27.6.1619.² Indian, Muscovite and Turkish envoys had also recently arrived, in addition to the English agents of the East India Company resident in Isfahan. According to the MSS. *Hist. Miss.*³ it was the 27th July, when riding in the Maidan, that in his unconventional way 'Abbas I took the Spanish ambassador aside with an interpreter; then

"de Silva set forth to him the complaints of his Most Catholic King, viz. that the *Shah* 'had taken from him' (the king of Spain) 'the island of Bahrain with its pearl fishery, and the fortress at Bandar' (i.e. Gāmbnun) "together with other places on the land The king "curtly replied to the first part that the island in question had been taken away by himself "from the Shaikh of Hurmuz, formerly and still now his vassal: wherefore there was nothing "to do with the king of Spain in this matter. And, without giving the ambassador time "to answer a single word, he" (the Shah) "turned his back on him in a disparaging manner "and entered the palace. . . ."

Whether that date is an error for August 2nd, and this was part of the following incident or not, both della Valle⁴ and the MSS. *Hist. Miss.*⁵ give 2.8.1619 as the date of the official representations.

The account they separately tell, pieced together is to this effect: 'Abbas I was about to go off into the hills when he summoned the various ambassadors to an audience in the Maidan, 2nd August:

'He caused also to sit near him the Fr. Vicar (Provincial) of the Discalced Carmelites, 'who alone with two other gentlemen of the ambassador . . . he called them to come 'near, wishing them to be, as it were, witnesses present to listen (to what would be said), 'but not the rest, nor a single one of the Portuguese Augustinian Fathers, although they 'had come with the other guests. Of the king's people there joined the group only . . .'

'Being seated after this fashion, for the first thing with much insistence and many compliments the king begged the Fr. Vicar (Provincial) to be pleased to be the interpreter 'in the talk with the ambassador, saying that he was not satisfied with the ambassador's 'own interpreter: and the Father expressed himself ready to do his Majesty's bidding. The 'ambassador remarked that he desired nothing more than that his Majesty should show 'favour to the Religious, both the Portuguese Augustinians and the Discalced Carmelites 'sent from Rome, and that they should be given sites and permitted to make houses, i.e. 'convents, in which would be included churches after their style. . . . The Shah answered 'that this matter need not concern any ambassador from Spain for he ('Abbas I) was 'already of his own volition doing this.

'2. The ambassador stated as the desires of his master, the king of Spain, that the Shah 'should enter into amicable relations with the Portuguese, subjects of king Philip, and 'refrain from favouring the English corsairs intent on damaging the latter.

'Here the Shah brusquely interrupted, blaming the Portuguese for the kind of amicable 'relations they were maintaining with himself—ill-treating Muslim traders, taking them 'slaves, making Christians of them by force. Should they change their methods he was 'prepared to be their good friend. But he said nothing about the English, and it was 'already noised abroad that he had granted them the privilege of disembarking their goods 'at Gāmbnun.

'3. Don Garcia asked for the restitution of the island of *Bahrain* ("Brahcrem") and of 'the fort at Bandar Gāmbnun to the Shaikh' ("king") 'of Hurmuz, vassal of the Portuguese.

¹ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. XXXI, book 3, part 2. On 18.6.1619 the Shah had been in Isfahan and Fr. John Thaddeus had tried to see him on Carmelite business and to obtain an audience for Don Garcia, but "he the Shah, departed again "at once, so that, when the Fr. Vicar Provincial had learnt of the king being there and had got to the palace in haste, "as soon as he could, he found that the monarch had already gone away. . . ." *Vide della Valle*, letter of 24.8.1619, vol. 2, VI, p. 15.

² Chap. XXXVII, book 3, part 2, O.C.D. ⁴ Vol. II, XVII, p. 55

³ Fr. Dimas, letter, 27.6.1619, O.C.D. ⁵ Chap. XXXI, book 3, part 2.

'Remaining silent as to the point of the Shaikh of Hurmuz being a Portuguese subject, the Shah replied that, better than to anyone else, the island of Bahrain belonged to him, to whom, as being a co-religionist, it was nearest, he thought. Then, as to the fort at Gāmburun, which was on the mainland of Persia, he deemed it to appertain to his dominions.

'As to the complaints against the English, open enemies of the Spanish crown, the Shah angrily retorted that it did not please him to refuse access to anyone within his borders, least of all to the English who were useful in trade.

'The Shah said that he was signing a treaty with the Turks, but was ready to break it, whenever the Christian princes first opened the attack on the Turks.'¹

After this verbal exchange of views, unpromising as it was, Don Garcia appears to have made no further attempt to put relations on a better footing or to remedy some, at least, of 'Abbas I's grievances by binding, in his sovereign's name, the Portuguese officials at Hurmuz to courteous and friendly methods,—although to modern ideas the position was by no means desperate, and negotiations could have been profitably continued. He was, however,² by temperament not the individual to deal easily with Orientals: he

'was a nobleman, very punctilious, man of his word in a country where no one was, crude and antiquarian, well on in years, somewhat acid at times, so that 'Abbas I is said to have mocked at him. . . . More than once when speaking to him the Shah suddenly turned his back on him. The Persians tried Don Garcia's patience with their inconstancies and casual ways.'

Then, to repeat the words of Pietro della Valle's letter of 21.10.1619, already quoted in a different connection:

"Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa left to return to Hurmuz, 25.8.1619. The following day there departed to accompany the ambassador two Religious from among those residing here, i.e. Fr. Dimas of the Cross, O.C.D., my confessor, and . . . a Portuguese Augustinian, who both were going to Hurmuz on business for their Orders. . . . Two days later" (i.e. 16.9.1619) "the Fr. Vicar of the Discalced Carmelites one evening in the Maidan, when I was present in such a way as to see and hear everything, presented to the king some letters from Spain which had come by way of Hurmuz and which the Captain of Hurmuz had sent on to Isfahan by a postman to Don Garcia, who had received these when already on the road south, and had forwarded them to the Fr. Vicar" (Provincial) "of the Discalced Carmelites begging him to do the requisite in his (Don Garcia's) absence. . . ." The Spanish ambassador was in no mind to retrace his steps to Isfahan.

According to the MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, although unwillingly submitting to such a commission and to occupying himself with affairs of temporal politics, Fr. John Thaddeus in due course delivered the letters to Shah 'Abbas and later translated them: the tenour of king Philip's letter was that

- (a) five galleons very shortly would be lying off Hurmuz, to be followed by other ships;
- (b) he proposed regulations for the trade in silk;
- (c) an agreement was proposed over the customs duties of Hurmuz and the safety of disembarking in Portugal;
- (d) on the other hand, the king of Spain still insisted on the restitution to the suzerainty of Hurmuz of the islands of *Bahrain* and *Qishm*, and the fort at *Gāmburun*.

¹ The date of this appears confused in MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, which adds that Edward Monox, the new 'Consul' of the English arrived the same day, 3rd March, in Isfahan, and was visited by Fr. John Thaddeus and Pietro della Valle. The latter certainly records (letter of 4.4.1620, vol. II, XVIII, p. 147) that on 4.3.1620 they had visited Monox, the new 'Resident' of the English—an early use of that office in Persia—who had arrived that day in succession to Thomas Barker, who had died in Isfahan some months previously.

² See *En Persia*, vol. II, pp. 105-6.

Apprehending objections by 'Abbas I Don Garcia by this messenger gave his authority to Fr. John Thaddeus to give way in regard to the two clauses last mentioned, on condition that Spain were allotted a free port in the Persian Empire for Spanish (and Portuguese) vessels, from which ships of other nations, particularly those of the English, would be rigorously excluded. Shah 'Abbas was, however, disgusted by these proposals,

'asserting that the Portuguese have nothing in hand to offer him,¹ for as regards the silk 'export that would be allotted to the highest bidder—the Armenian traders of Julfa had 'indeed offered to pay him more than the English themselves. . . .'

It is doubtless to the above terms from Madrid, modified still further by Don Garcia, that della Valle's letter of 21.10.1619 (IV, p. 81) refers:

"On 17.9.1619 the king ordered a 'Diwan', or council, should sit in public to fix the price "of the silk, and summoned to it the Armenians from Julfa, the English and also the Fr. "Vicar (Provincial) of the Discalced Carmelites, because of the letters recently received "from Spain. The Fr. Vicar (Provincial) spoke first and replied that he had no orders "from Spain to offer any price, but merely to discuss the business on certain conditions, "which he had in writing. . . . On 3.10.1619 they summoned to the palace Fr. John "Thaddeus, saying that the Shah wished to send an answer to the letters which had come "from Spain. But, although the Father went and waited there all day, nothing was done, "because the king had been engaged in something else. On the following day the Shah "had the letters translated by the Fr. Vicar (Provincial) brought and read to him, without "the Father going there: only he instructed the Mihmandar to dispatch a reply to the "ambassador, Don Garcia, and inform him that the king of Spain was aware of his ('Abbas "I) having sent Fr. Redempt (to Madrid) with regard to this business, and therefore he "('Abbas I) "proposed to await the return of Fr. Redempt, when having heard the latter's "report he would decide what to do. . . ."

* * * *

* * *

* *

With the interesting note² that on 23.10.1619 one of the Dominican Fathers from the Armenian Uniat district of Nakhchiwan ('Alingia' so called by della Valle and others), who had gone to Europe two years before and just arrived in Isfahan, presented to Shah 'Abbas in the presence of the Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites a letter from the king of France and a "complimentary one of credence" from Fr. Joseph the Capuchin of Paris—(Cardinal Richelieu's 'Eminence Grise'?)—who in the name of a French princess of the blood sent the Persian king one picture of a saint and another of S. John, as well as a Brief from the Pope,³ we pass to the year 1620 which opened with "a little trouble the Carmelite Fathers had on the 5th "January"⁴—its nature is not stated—and then the 16th January, the Armenian Epiphany by the old calendar, provides one of those baffling scenes of 'Abbas I in his inquisitive mood. He had announced his intention of attending the ceremonies known as 'Khatchaturan', when

¹ One curious offer made by Don Garcia de Silva on behalf of the king of Spain was to close the Red Sea to pilgrims from India and Egypt which, according to MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. XXVII, the Shah spurned, as in October 1618 his forces had beaten off the Turks, who had sued for peace

² della Valle's letter of 4.4.1620, p. 88.

³ This must have been that of 28.4.1618 (Arch. Secr. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 15, p. 320, also vol. 34, p. 215) recommending the poor Catholics harried by the wars and Archbishop Matthew of Nakhchiwan (see appendix for text of Brief). On the same day the Pope sent a Brief (see appendix for text) to the king of Spain asking him to write to the Shah of Persia and to his own officials in the Indies and Hurmuz to assist these Dominicans. There is also a Brief dated 29.5.1618 to Archbishop Matthew, sympathizing with the afflictions of the diocese.

⁴ della Valle, p. 108.

'crosses' (the equivalent of the Armenian word just used) were plunged into the water of the Zaiyandehrud river, just as on the Epiphany in other Eastern rites the waters are solemnly blessed each year by the metropolitan or bishop after celebration of the liturgy casting a cross into the sea:

'The Shah had guards placed on the roads leading from Isfahan to Julfa, so that no horses, except those of persons of consideration, should disturb the processions. More than a hundred crosses of silver and rock-crystal escorted by the clergy of the ten¹ Gregorian churches in Julfa and two in Isfahan city, no cross with an escort of less than four clerics in copes of cloth of gold of various colours, attended by bearers of candles, were brought in procession to the bank of the river and thence to a small islet in the midst of the shallow water, while a large concourse of Armenians and Persians from the city lined the banks and watched the ceremony. The interval of waiting for the arrival of the Shah, who came late accompanied by his sons and ministers, was filled by games and dances.

'When 'Abbas I arrived, he preceded the Armenian Patriarch Melchisadech across the water and, restless person that he was, took on himself to play the master of ceremonies for this Christian religious ceremony: here was the Patriarch to stand, there were the rites to be performed, here the clergy were to be aligned, and the throng accompanying the crosses, so that there might be no crowding: and many other details were similarly supervised.

'The actual rites consisted of prayers, pouring the oil of chrism into the water, and then plunging all the crosses into it, when many persons out of devotion stripped and entered the river.

'Then, the ceremony ended, 'Abbas I stood, still surrounded closely by the bearers of the crosses, questioning the principal Armenian whether his race considered Georgians or Franks the better Christians, to which Khwajeh Nazar diplomatically replied that the former observed fasting the better. To this Shah all fasting was repugnant, and so he more precisely stated that he asked the question as to observance of the religious laws, and performance of the rites: whereupon Khwajeh Nazar praised the Latins. Next 'Abbas wanted to know from the Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites whether in his opinion Armenians or Georgians were the better Christians, and Father John Thaddeus gave his vote for the Armenians (an opinion from which Pietro della Valle, also present and who also related the incident, radically differed on the ground that in the view of Catholic authors of distinction the Georgians had never departed from the Catholic Faith, such errors as they have being derived from the orthodox Greeks, whereas the heresies of the Armenians are graver than those of any other Christian race in the East).

'The rain increasing and the streets becoming muddy, the Persian monarch adjourned with his immediate entourage and three of the Catholic missionaries to the house of the late Khwajeh Safar, the principal Armenian, and there spent the rest of the day and the night. Here, in the conversation on religious matters which filled the hours before night, Shah 'Abbas several times asserted that 'whoever did not believe in Jesus Christ, and did not believe that Jesus Christ was the Spirit of God, was a "Kafir"—an infidel. In addition he wished to see and caused to be fetched to him certain relics of saints, which had been brought from Armenia when the people of Julfa were transplanted to Isfahan: and, when some priests, vested in copes and with lights and tapers brought them in reverently, 'Abbas rose, kissed the relics and placed them on his head; then he bade those standing round to stand reverently before such holy objects, paying them indeed almost as much honour as a Christian sovereign might have done.

'Even more astonishing—in a Muslim monarch, and that the Armenian clergy tolerated it with such equanimity, for the two Augustinian friars present were scandalized—was that the Shah took it into his head that he would make a gift of a piece of the relic of S. Ripsima, the famed virgin and martyr of Armenia, to Fr. John Thaddeus, and not

¹ By 1620 there were thus only ten schismatic churches in Julia.

'only touched but broke the bone of the Saint with his own hands and, wrapping it in a piece of clean paper, handed it to the Carmelite Vicar Provincial.'¹

A few days later the 'secretary of state', Aqa Mir, arrived unexpectedly at the Carmelite convent and with much curiosity inspected the church and library: thence he went on for a similar visit to the Augustinian convent, the former visit being returned by Fr. John Thaddeus and Pietro della Valle together after some days.²

The influence of the Carmelite Vicar Provincial with the Shah, Court and people generally was perhaps then at its zenith. He had received from Don Garcia de Silva at Hurmuz a letter to present to the Persian monarch: and on Carnival day, 3.3.1620, in the afternoon 'Abbas I came out on to the Maidan, where Fr. John Thaddeus, dismounting from his horse, handed over the letter in question.

"The king opened and gave it to the Father to read . . . he directed the Father to 'write to the princes of Christendom that he ('Abbas) made him (Fr. John Thaddeus) 'his procurator. As a sign of this, as if pledging troth with him he ('Abbas I) took his 'hand and pressed it: and the Father kissed his hand, and promised to write in conformity 'with what he had already several times done. . . . Then looking at the spectacles of 'Father John with the attachments that fasten them to the ears, he (the Shah) took them 'saying that he wanted to see whether that invention suited him too, and that next evening 'he would bring them back. The Father wished to hand over the spectacle-case too, so 'that the spectacles might the better be protected against being broken. But the Shah 'said that there was no need—he should not be afraid."

In substance, the verbal comment of the Shah on this letter from Hurmuz had been that the Spanish king had never fulfilled his promise to attack the Turks.

In this connection there may be noted in the Appendix of Latin Briefs extracts from that of Pope Gregory XV, dated 27.10.1621 (Arch. Vat., Arm. XLV, vol. 19, p. 158, No. 278), addressed to king Philip III of Spain: "Concerning the League to be joined between the "Christian Princes against the undertakings of the Turks", showing that on his part the Sovereign Pontiff this year in his appeal to sink differences and send forces used, and in vain as it proved, every argument possible to stir up the torpid Spanish king to come to the help of Poland (happily on 22.1.1622 in another Brief he was able to congratulate the Archbishop of Cracow on a victory won by the Polish army over the invading Turks):

" . . . Assuredly with how remarkable a temerity this new Tyrant of the Turks is, the "terror of our countries shows. For he is warring against that kingdom which his ancestors, "distinguished as they were for their victories and the disasters they inflicted on our nations, "even so never dared yet to attack. Now races in innumerable hordes, barbarous in "savagery, since they are making an assault on, those marches of the Christian empire, "which no citadels defend, even if the breasts and hands of the Polish soldiers have up till "now been their strongest rampart—it is greatly to be feared lest that armed swarm of "hostile tribes break down every dam and march on to the plains of Poland lying exposed "there, and open up for themselves far and wide an approach for conquering Germany. . . . "For, if the Poles should not sustain the first assaults of the enemy, what more is left but "for the Turks intoxicated with success and raging with villainy to unite the Western "Empire to that of the East? . . . It is no remote tales of destruction that in frightened "strains We are telling, nor are We wailing over terrors made up by some mumbling "dotard, or story-book battles. Let but Your Majesty turn the eyes of Your intelligence "on the turmoil of Germany in upheaval, and the nearby provinces. Indeed We must "fear lest we seem wise too late and be only stirred to repel dangers once their magnitude "neglected by our sloth has well-nigh robbed us of hope of safety. . . . The Turks are

¹ This account is from MSS. *Hist. Mus.*, chap. XXXIV, book 3, part 2.

² P. della Valle, book 2, VII-XIV, p. 134.

"terrifying those outlying regions with their forces, the heretics are gnawing the vitals and attacking continually the very heart of the Empire with hostile minds and deadly weapons; then, what is worse than that, matters have reached such a pitch that those fellows themselves are now making treaties with the Turks (once their common foes) and enticing their forces by prayers and bribes to ruin ourselves. Not even the plight of the Greeks teaches them sufficiently what sure risk of their own ruin they are piling up for themselves; for they, the Greeks, when, labouring with their intestine quarrels amongst themselves one party against the other, they called on the Ottomans to come to Thrace from Asia, in a short space were being crushed by the very arms they fancied were protecting them. . . .

". . . Therefore We entirely trust You will be willing to work with every resource to make this league as soon as can be. For We hope that the rest of the princes will be thus persuaded that since We wish You yourself to be extolled not only as a partner in but as the author of so glorious an event. . . . This is what We with all Our soul exhort You in the bowels of Jesus Christ, dearest son; this is what Germany, the pristine parent of the Austrian princes, seems to beg and demand of You: for this the princes of Poland joined as they are to You in close ties of affinity pray and entreat: and again the Christian commonwealth shouts aloud that on this issue depends its own safety and prestige; but of You Christ, the great God of armies to Whom all princes are tributaries, seems to demand this same by His Pontiff's voice. . . . Our venerable Brethren the Patriarch of Alexandria and the Archbishop of Thebes, Our Apostolic Nuncios, will treat of these considerations with You in more detail in Our name. . . ."

Meanwhile the situation in Hurmuz grew more tense with the threat of assault and the Persian monarch waiting an opportunity to throw off the mask. Imam Quli Khan of Shiraz had several times made raids on Arabs not far from the island. The views of the naval and fortress commanders were at variance. As soon as the galleons arrived at Hurmuz that spring of 1620, both the commander, the noted Ruy Freire d'Andrade, and the Captain of Hurmuz sent letters asking the counsel of Fr. John Thaddeus:¹ further letters reached Isfahan 25.8.1620 and placed the Carmelite Provincial in a quandary: such a task was unwelcome, but he might be injuring Catholic interests, including those of his Order, by not accepting it.²

So,³

"on the evening of 4.9.1620 there left Isfahan the Fr. Vicar Provincial to treat with the king about the above business (i.e. the Portuguese in Hurmuz, and their feelers regarding a settlement) and he took with him, to present them, the Briefs from Rome and the latest letters from Poland. . . . But after the Father had travelled for several days he found a large part of the Court along the road and finally learnt that the Shah, who was already *en route* for Isfahan and left Mazandaran by a road unknown" (to the men), "had suddenly turned back. . . . Uncertain as to the place where the king had gone, the Father thought it better to return to Isfahan and await there more definite news. The Father Vicar (Provincial) therefore got back to Isfahan on the morning of 15.9.1620 and found here other more recent letters from Hurmuz—the Commander of the galleons was complaining greatly at seeing affairs in Hurmuz go from bad to worse. . . . This news enlightened the Fr. Vicar (Provincial) as to the small desire the officials in Hurmuz had of acting properly: and so he wrote that he had not been able to find the Shah and should not go again to look for him, failing receipt of further news from them" (at Hurmuz). . . .

Not only in Hurmuz was this lack of desire for accommodation with the Shah and an overweening confidence on the part of the Portuguese discernible, for a month or so earlier,

"3.8.1620, there left Isfahan Fr. Manuel of the Mother of God, a Portuguese Augustinian, who was being sent by his Religious to Hurmuz to urge in the name of his Order that

¹ P. della Valle, book 2, VII–XIV, p. 171.

² *Idem*, p. 191.

³ *Idem*, p. 196.

"this (proposed) embassy from Hurmuz should not be dispatched to Persia, and that there 'should be no further treating, as it is time wasted, but that war should be begun and 'nothing else. . . .'"¹

The Shah did not return in September to the capital:

'That autumn (1620) 'Abbas I fell so seriously ill at Farrahabad in Mazandaran that 'his attendants despaired of his life. His soldiery, largely a personally controlled element, 'with the master's hand removed and probably aware of his critical condition began to 'get restless, so that he had Imam Quli Mirza, his third son, declared as his heir. His 'health taking a slight turn for the better, he changed his mind; and this son, having 'fallen from favour or become an object of suspicion like his elder brother, was in his turn 'blinded by his jealous parent. Then 'Abbas I had himself borne on a litter in the sight 'of the troops and taken to Firuzabad (Firuzkuh?), where his condition improved. In the 'following year, 1621, similarly he had himself transported to Khurasan, whence he prepared to seize and reconquer Kandahar, while he charged the Khan of Shiraz' (Imam Quli Khan) 'with preparations for a fresh attack on the Portuguese whose land troops at 'that time numbered about 3,000 only, many of them in poor condition—with no water 'on the island. . . .'"²

In May 1621 there returned to Persia, as first Visitor General of the Carmelite Missions in Persia and the East, Fr. Vincent of S. Francis, one of the three pioneers of 1607, and founder of the Residence at Hurmuz, who after reverting to work in Italy about 1616 had become prior of the convent at Palermo, and of that of S. Paul in Rome: a purport of the instructions given him as to his duties will be found in the section of this work dealing with the administration of the Mission: the 'directions' he left on his departure, dated 22.9.1621, are to be found in O.C.D. 236 a: they include some of his own views as expressed in his letter of 3.6.1613 from Hurmuz, such as that in Isfahan city the missionaries might not ride on horseback, except in cases judged serious by the Superior. With him there came four Fathers: Dominic of S. Mary, Basil of S. Francis, Prosper of the Holy Spirit, Peter Thomas of Jesus; the first three of whom, a Cremonese, a Portuguese and a Spaniard respectively were all to have important careers in the missions, the two latter being of marked ability. After their arrival Fr. John Thaddeus laid down his offices of Vicar Provincial, which he had exercised since 1614, and of Prior, in which he had acted since the departure of Fr. Redempt in 1615. Fr. Leander, by that time established at Goa, was appointed Vicar Provincial: Fr. Prosper was elected Prior.

Fr. Vincent brought with him a Brief from Pope Paul V addressed to Shah 'Abbas.³

Before June of that year the Shah was back in his capital from Khurasan, restored to health; and a striking account⁴ has been left on record by the Visitor General of an audience at which he was present, 5.6.1621.⁵ The audience was a double one—to the Agent, then Edward Monox, and other representatives of the East India Company, who at that time were preparing for important negotiations and had gifts to present to the Shah; to counterweigh those sent by the king of Spain through Don Garcia, no doubt—and to the Carmelite Visitor General. Fr. Vincent's account begins:

"There are in Persia some English merchants, Lutherans and of other sects, here to buy 'silk: and one of them who is the Chief and whom the rest obey resides in the city of

¹ della Valle, vol. 2, VIII, p. 187.

² MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. XXXVI, book 3, part 2.

³ See appendix for Latin text: it was dated 16.7.1620 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 14, p. 249). He also had another of the same date, addressed by the Pope to the "Discalced Carmelites in Persia, Sind and Hurmuz" (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 14, p. 250). It is interesting because it bids them "... strive ... especially to bring back to the Church the 'heretics, above all the English merchants, who trade in Isfahan, but strengthen by teaching and frequent administration 'of the Sacraments those who are secretly Catholics among you. . . ."

⁴ In Spanish, O.C.D. 235 c (71).

⁵ della Valle, who states that he was not personally present, gives a shorter account, which he had from the Carmelites, in his vol. 2, VI, p. 285.

"Isfahan. the merchants in England choose him to receive the money, which they remit "him in order to purchase the silk, which each year may attain a total quantity of 600,000 "ducats,¹ which is shipped and exported from Jashk, a port on the Persian Gulf, in English "ships which come out each year. This English Agent is treated by the Shah like an "ambassador.

"At the season when the Fr. Visitor General arrived in the city of Isfahan, the English "had some articles, which had reached them by the ships that year, and they had asked "an audience of the king in order to offer them as gifts, and so his Highness sent for them "on that day and also summoned our Fr. Vincent, whom together with his companion² "the king of Persia received inside the Haram or Saraglio, where no one may enter without "special permission from his Majesty.

"With his back to the wall of the farther side of the room, his Highness was sitting, as "was his wont, on the floor, which was covered with rich carpets: he was eating alone "from off a silken tablecloth. He had in front of him a single, but very large silver dish, "on which there was a variety of foods made from rice of various hues,³ all cooked dif- "ferently and each arranged in its compartment, in the separate compartments of rice "there being buried partridges, pigeons, quails, and all sorts of boiled and roasted meats. "He had also in front of him some Chinese porcelain bowls of rather small size, filled with "the juice of lemons and oranges sweetened with sugar and flavoured with spices, from "which to take a spoonful or two from time to time while he ate.⁴ For it is the Persian "custom, while they are eating, not to drink water or wine, and in order to be able to "digest the food . . . they use these juices while feeding: when they have finished, after "a short time they begin to drink. . . .

"Round the same apartment were also seated and eating off tablecloths of silk some "of the principal among the king's subjects and two envoys from the king of Tatar, "who had come from Caffa" (Crimean peninsula) "and also the English Agent mentioned "above together with his Lutheran chaplain attired in a flowing gown of black damask, "having wide and long sleeves . . . as well as their interpreter with four other English "heretics.

"The Fr. Visitor entered and made the proper obeisance to the Shah, who bade him "sit down, together with his companion, at the same tablecloth and dish, from which he "himself was eating. He (the Shah) said that he was welcome and that he remembered "seeing him in Persia on two previous occasions, and knew him very well: then he enquired "about the Visitor's health and the date of his arrival in Isfahan. Next, Fr. Vincent "presented the letters he had brought: two Briefs⁵ from His Holiness (one in reply to a "letter, in which the Shah had written to the Pope) another letter from the Grand Master "of Malta, who had handed it to the Fr. Visitor General on his passage by Malta. The "Shah replied graciously and, taking the letters, gave them to Mir Abul Ma'ali, his chief "secretary of state, to have translated.

"Two days previously the English had been with the king and discoursed at great length "on the matter of religion and spoken ill of the Catholics saying that they were idolaters, "who adored pictures and images, and made the sign of the cross, etc. The Shah had "said that he would bring the Fathers together with them, so that they might hold a "disputation on these matters.

"This was the motive why the king of Persia asked the Fathers about the difference "there is between Catholics and English.

"The Fr. Visitor answered that the English are heretics and false Christians, and that

¹ This was a remarkable burst of trade in a matter of some five years since the English Company first visited Persia.

² i.e. Fr. John Thaddeus.

³ The *pilau's* of the Persian cuisine are numerous and treated in many ways—with saffron, turmeric, cochineal, and fruit-juices, sauces and vegetables, game, poultry, meat.

⁴ The viands and lay-out of a Persian meal as described here are equally true of the dishes, fruit-juices, etc., used in 1925.

⁵ The text of one, dated 16.7.1620, is given with other Latin Briefs in the appendix to this work: it is merely a letter of recommendation.

"Roman Catholics are the true Christians. The Shah continued on this topic of religion and touched in the course of it on four main points, which were:

"(a) fasting and good works, (b) about the Cross, and its adoration and images, (c) on free-will, (d) on the antiquity of the Roman Catholic religion, and the primacy of the Sovereign Pontiff.

"The occasion for the first topic, that of fasting and good works, arose from the Shah asking the Fathers why they were not eating. They replied that it was Ember Saturday in Pentecost. The king enquired of the English what fasts they kept. Their 'Chief' replied that God had not commanded men to fast, and, although the English Agent spoke through his interpreter, still the king asked the Fathers what he was saying, and they answered in Persian that the Englishman said that God had not commanded men to fast: and the Fathers continued: 'See, your Highness, what an absurd falsehood and error it is, as it is true that by their religious laws Christians, Muslims, Jews and Gentiles have fasts of obligation.'

"Here there was small controversy since the matter was manifest and clear. With one voice the Shah and the grandees sitting with him said that it was a very great error and falsehood, because fasts, prayer, penitential exercises and good works are recommended in the law of Moses, in the Gospel, and the Quran, and in fine by all the prophets.

"Second point: on the Cross, its adoration, and on images. The Shah enquired of the Fathers whether the English made the sign of the Cross to bless themselves. The Fathers answered 'no'. He asked further whether they had images of the saints and adored them: the reply was given him: 'no'. He asked the Fathers: 'Why do the Franks venerate them, as in this they resemble the Idolaters?' (Persians, in praying, prostrate themselves repeatedly, and with their head and forehead venerate certain seals or counters of earth, of the size of a doubloon, and the beads, on which they recite their prayers, are made from earth from Mecca.)

"In order to convince him the Fathers put the question to the king: 'Because your Highness and your people prostrate yourselves and worship seals and beads made of earth would it be right for us to call your Highness and your people idolaters? Certainly not, because we know that, when you perform that act of adoration, you do not mean by it that that seal and stone are God, but do it out of piety and reverence for that soil, as it comes from the places of sepulture of your ancestors and the great men whom you consider saints.' The Shah answered: 'That is not the chief reason and intention we have for worshipping on earthen seals¹ and beads, but rather in that act of veneration we make an act of recognizing that we are clay, and that from earth God created us, and we adore the Creator of this: and the reason why in the mosques and in our houses whilst we say our prayers on matting and carpets our prayers would not be lawful and acceptable, unless we said them on' (i.e. touching) 'the earth. With this in view, for more convenience and cleanliness we use the earthen medallions and beads: and that they are of this or that soil is an accidental matter: it suffices that it be earth. And so, when we have any other sort of stone, even if it be a piece of rock, we have no need of a seal. It is also true that we venerate it (the seal) as a memorial and a pious object, as thou sayest, but not mainly for that reason.'

"To this the Fathers replied: 'Very good! And thus our Christian religion does not adore nor serve images, as if they were gods, nor does it expect from them the future judgment (God preserve us from such a thing!), but it venerates images for the things they represent. They serve us also as memorials to remind us of the virtues of those saints they represent, in order that we may imitate them and beg them to intercede by their prayers with our Lord God, that He will grant us what we ask and that we may be good and his servants, as they have been, so that we may attain the glory which they now enjoy. So that, just as your Highness and your people do not say that that

¹ *Muhreh* which Shiah touch with their foreheads in the prostrations during prayer.

“earthen medallion is God, no more do we say that the statues of the saints are gods, “nor do we adore them as such.’ With these reasonings the Shah and his courtiers remained content.

“The king said that Christians do not make the cross properly because there are only three nails, and we make the sign of it in four places: and, thus speaking, the Shah made the sign as a proof of what he said. The Fr. Visitor replied that it is not done on account of the nails of the Cross, but in order to signify the Trinity of Persons and unity of God and the incarnation of the Son of God: and so it is done at His name, signifying that there is one God alone, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, who are the three Persons; and the Father is signed on the head, to signify that He is the beginning of the other Persons, the Son on the body to signify that He became man in the virginal womb of S. Mary, and the Holy Ghost is signed on the two shoulders to signify that the Third Person proceeds from the Father and the Son. The king was pleased to have heard this explanation and said: ‘I believed that you made the cross in order to signify that Christ, the Lord, Son of God and man, died on the cross in order to save and redeem all men.’ The king then said: ‘We hold that the Lord Jesus is the Spirit of God and was not crucified by the Jews, but that God, seeing that the Jews wanted to crucify him, drew him up as the Spirit into heaven, putting the features of Jesus on Judas, who had sold him and whom, because he appeared to be so like Him, they took and crucified.’

“The Father said, ‘We hold in the Gospel that Jesus Christ is the Word of God, and that He himself as a man was crucified for the salvation of men and the third day rose from the dead and after 40 days ascended into heaven in the sight of all his disciples, who were afterwards witnesses of these truths for all the world.’

“The king asked whether the English believe this. The Fr. Visitor replied ‘yes’. The Shah put the question to the minister (clergyman) of the English who was present, and who confirmed that it was the case, because in this particular they believe the same as the Roman Catholics: and then, in order to show courtesy to the Fathers, with his hand the king poured out and gave them to drink, making a sign of the cross over the cup.

“The third point concerned free-will. The king turned to question the Fathers—who were the better, the English or the Roman Christian. The Fathers replied that by its fruit the goodness and quality of the tree are known: that the king should enquire about the things the English did and the examples they gave, and from those he would be able to judge. The Agent of the English rejoined that they were the better Christians, and that they had the right Faith. On this the Fathers observed: ‘Shah, we do not want to say more to your Highness than this, that the English are heretics and of a like sect as the Turks, who deny free-will and say that all the evil men do and the demons do is done of necessity, and they cannot do less, because God so wills: and so they (the English) say that God does everything, whether good or evil.’

“Here the grandees of the king looked at each other, and the Shah in particular jumped from his seat (as the saying goes) and began to make a sermon to all present, very earnestly as he detested that theory. He spoke with great gusto, so that the Tatar envoys from Caffa, who were there and who are of the same sect as the Turks, should hear him. After the king finished his arguments, the Fathers said: ‘This is the reason, your Majesty, why the English, who have no consciences nor fear of God, are pirates, rob, slay, destroy, and one cannot rely on their word, because they say that they cannot do anything else, seeing that they have no option.’

“The English did not know what reply to make during all this harangue of the Shah, which lasted for the space of more than three-quarters of an hour, during which his Highness brought forward many arguments and examples in opposition to the English who deny free-will, and in particular he said that it was most false. . . .

“Regarding the fourth and last point, the antiquity of the Roman Catholic religion and the primacy of the Sovereign Pontiff, the Shah enquired how long the English had been

"separated from the Romans and the Pope. The Fr. Visitor told him '70 or 80 years'. "The Agent of the English said that *they* were the primitive Christians. The Fathers asked "him whether previous to those 70 or 80 years the English and Romans were all one and "whether all England paid obedience to the Roman Pontiff. The English answered 'yes: " 'it was the truth that formerly they yielded obedience to the Pope'. When this had been "admitted and translated to the Shah by the interpreter of the English themselves, his "Highness remarked that, just as the Sunnis and Turkish heretics will not ascribe the "primacy to Husain, son of Amir-ul-Mu'minin" (i.e. 'Ali), "but instead to 'Umar, so the "English do not obey the vicar of Jesus, who is the Pope of Rome: and for this they are "heretics.

"The sun was entering through a window and troubled the king: so he got up and "made a sign to the Fathers to follow him. Together with his Highness they entered a "smaller, but cooler apartment, and all sat down in this order: on the right hand he caused "the minister (clergyman) to sit and on the left near himself the Fathers (the Persians "consider the left-hand a more honoured seat, because, they say, it is on the side where "the heart is, and the sword is worn). Then 'Ali Quli Khan, governor of — and the "chief judge of the court of crimes; next the Georgians, and in another apartment, but "very near by, so that they could see and converse with the Shah, were his other gentlemen. "Below the minister, and beside him were the Tatars from Caffa, and last of all the rest "of the English, near whom in a little closet were the king's minstrels playing on musical "instruments and singing.

"The English wanted to discuss the business of the silk and to ask for it to be finished "and for the Shah's mandate for them to go and purchase it in Gilan and Shirwan. "The Shah made signs to one of his officials, who then told the interpreter that by no "manner of means was their business to be discussed, because it was not the time for "it, giving it to be understood that it was not suitable to talk of business in front of the "Fathers.

"The Shah returned once more to talk about the nails" (in the cross) "of Christ, asking "whether they were three or four. The answer was given him that some Saints said there "were four, but that the majority conclude that there were three. This opinion pleased "the Shah: and he crossed his legs, saying that with a single nail they had nailed both "feet, and that was how he had seen it in pictures. Here the English Agent wanted to "cast ridicule on the Catholics and asked the Fathers how many wounds Christ had in "His body. The Fr. Visitor answered him that there were five. He" (the English Agent— Monox) "laughed a great deal and said: 'No: there were four.' The Fr. Visitor enquired "which they were. He (the English Agent) replied: 'one wound only in the two feet, "because a single nail had transfixed them, and the rest in the two hands and the side.' "The Fr. Visitor, remarking that he (the Agent) was a layman and would know little "about philosophy, turned to the minister, and asked whether he too held that opinion: "to which the minister said 'yes'. So then the Fr. Visitor enquired once more of the "minister whether the wounds in the feet were continuous or contiguous: the latter answered "that they were continuous and for that reason were one wound. Our Religious remarked "that that was contrary to philosophy, because something 'continuous' is that which is "joined by a common end. But the wounds in Christ's feet were not coupled by a common "end: therefore they were not continuous, and in consequence they were two wounds, "and not one. The minister did not know what to answer. The Shah and the grandees "wanted to understand the point in dispute: it was explained to them, and they laughed "at the English for saying that in the two wounded feet there was only one wound because "a single nail pierced them.

"From time to time the musicians were playing and singing: and the Shah, paying heed "to the music, asked the Fathers whether music were lawful. They replied that immodest "or lascivious songs were not lawful, but songs and the Divine praises, as in the Psalms of "David and hymns of the Saints and others of that sort were lawful, and to sing them

"and praise God in them is an attribute of the Angels. The Shah approved with gusto "of this definition and said to the Georgians: 'Let us go and see the churches of the Fathers, " 'where they sing and have bells . . . ' and, turning to one of the Georgian princes, he "said to him: 'Thou shalt go to the churches of the Armenians, while we shall go to those " 'of the Franks.' The Shah said this, because he knew that the Armenians and Georgians "dislike each other. The Georgian answered his Highness resentfully: 'Let the dogs go " 'to the churches of the Armenians. I wish to accompany your Highness to those of the " 'Franks'—so great is the hatred these two races have for each other.

"The Fathers said to his Highness that, if he allowed, they would put a problem before "him: and the Shah bade them propound it. So they said: 'Since it is true that in all " 'countries and states there are good and bad people, perforce among our Christian " 'community there are also some bad men, who commit crimes: and perhaps it might " 'be necessary to punish them by shedding their blood, by mutilation of their limbs, or " 'by putting them to death.' So they enquired in such case who was to be the judge to "try the case and execute punishment, because it was not lawful for Religious to be judges, "or mix themselves up in secular affairs. Taking in one hand a piece of his garment, like "a man shaking the dust from it, the Shah answered and said: 'I have nothing to do with " 'any crime that any of your people may commit contrary to your law; but my wish is " 'that you punish misdemeanours, and that you see to and keep your houses, people and " 'community clean and free from such, so that there be no disorder or scandal: and, as " 'to criminal offences of which you cannot be the judge, since you are priests, choose from " 'among the Franks residing here or staying temporarily here one to be judge, with the " 'authority of a consul,¹ and you as priests, knowing more of the law, would be able to " 'tell the consul what in conscience and justice he should do. So that it is our wish that " 'you Fathers from the Pope execute justice between your people in conformity with the " 'law of Christ and the orders that you have from the Pope. I say the same to the English.' " 'Ali Quli Khan, the chief judge and . . . the king's secretary and Wazir, in loud voices "extolled this decree of the Shah, telling the Fathers that his Highness had done them a "great favour, on which the Fathers duly tendered thanks.

"The Shah asked the English whether their Gospel and ours were all one. The Agent "answered: 'No.' Thereupon the Fr. Visitor said that the Agent was telling the truth, "because our Gospel was the real one, and theirs false, being full of the falsehoods which "they told. On this the Shah reproved the Fr. Visitor, saying that the English had not "told him falsehoods and had always carried out their promises and were of much utility "in his country. 'But, you; yes,' he said to the Visitor, 'you have told me lies.' In reply "the Father asked: 'What falsehood have I told your Highness?' The Shah answered: " 'This, that the king of Portugal and Spain has promised to make war on the Turks: " 'when he has not done so.' The Father remarked: 'His Majesty the king of Spain and " 'the Christian princes have warred all these years against the Turks,' and then asked: " 'How many years is it that your Highness is making war on the Turks?' The Shah replied: " 'Twenty years.' The Father rejoined: 'Then, if in those twenty years the Emperor, " 'aided by the Christian princes, had not been to war with the Turks and had not kept " 'them occupied in Hungary and other parts (as he did in the years 1604-5-6 and 1607) " 'at the request and instance of the Pope, would your Highness have captured after Tabriz " 'and Julfa Erivan, Ganjeh, etc.? Later in the year 1607 did not your Highness take " 'Shamakha and Demirkapu, called by its other name "The Iron Gate" (Darband) " 'together with all the very fertile province of Shirwan, and, finally, is it not the fact that " 'your Highness had no further assault from the Turks until the year 1610, in which there " 'came Murad Pasha, who had delayed more than 7 years in bringing assistance and " 'relief to those provinces so that your Highness had been able so to consolidate your " 'position in them, to great advantage in that you obtained a signal victory?' The Shah "had nothing to say to this. The Fathers continued: 'Majesty, the war which the king of

¹ This seems to be an authorization of the extra-territorial jurisdiction, which prevailed in Persia till 1928.

"Poland is making against the Turks, too, is that not by a Catholic king, obedient to the Pope, the vicar of Christ?" The Shah answered: 'Tell me what the Pope is doing,¹ not what others are doing.' The Fathers rejoined: 'What the Christian princes are doing may also be said to be what the Pope is doing, because, just as when the hand does any good action, it is the head which directs it and to it the praise is given, and, just as when Allah Virdi Khan, Amir Khan, etc., generals of your Highness, gain any victories or conquer any territory, the glory is attributed to your Highness, so also the victories won by the Christian princes are attributed to the Pope who is the head and father of all Christians.'

"His Highness observed that, if at the time when he had been waging war from this quarter, the Christians had done so over there, already the Turks would have been totally destroyed; and to this the Fathers answered that this was very true, and His Holiness was working hard and had laboured to unite all the Christian princes and persuade them to do so; but he was unable to compel them, and they were not doing so because they have other serious and important preoccupations.

"To that the Shah returned that, if the Pope were in person to go to fight against the Turks and to spend his treasure on it, all the rest of the Christian princes would go too and expend their money and resources. For, whoever does not obey the Pope, the vicar of Christ, is no good Christian.

"Thereupon the Fathers said: 'Well! that is why we said, your Majesty, that the English are no good Christians, because they do not obey the Pope, and they are the cause of the Christian Catholic princes not making war on the Turks. For these heretics, disobedient to the Pope, rebel against their Catholic princes, who are obedient to him, and make war on them, as in these last years the Palatine, son-in-law of the king of England, did against the Emperor, although, thanks to God, the Emperor has gained the victory over him and despoiled him of his lands and punished him as he deserved.'

"At this audience there was present a Flemish painter, whom the king was keeping in order to make use of him: and on this occasion he caused another painter, one of the best in Persia (but much inferior to the Fleming), to come in and, in order to show off his painter and his art, he drew out from a portfolio various designs on paper, among which was one of the Descent of Christ from the Cross, and another of Shah Tahmasp, great-grandfather² of the king, which he kissed, making an inclination of his head.

"So the Fathers observed: 'Just as your Highness and your people make gestures of respect, and venerate the portraits of your ancestors, so we Christians venerate the images of the Saints.' With that the Shah expressed approval of the veneration which is paid to pictures of the Saints and, taking the painting of the Descent from the Cross, he kissed it and handed it to us to venerate: and he said: 'I love the Lord Jesus and St. Mary so much that, were anyone in my kingdom to speak ill of or blaspheme against them, I would have him burnt alive': and he turned to his chief justiciar, who was present, and bade him do so.

"It was already late, and the guests got up, and we too took our leave of the king, kissing his hand. As we went out, the English made apologies to the Fathers and begged their pardon for having exceeded the limits of politeness. The Fathers answered that in disputations on matters of religion neither politeness nor dissimulation nor compliments

¹ The Papal correspondence contains constant exhortations to the Christian princes, and instances of naval and military assistance provided by the Papal forces to operations against the Turks, e.g. in Arm. XLV, vol. 10, p. 13 (22) there is a letter to the king of Spain, of the 3rd Nones of July 1614. The king had ordered a fleet to be got ready to serve as an obstacle to the Turks' progress: "As you asked, We have ordered the commander of our ships to sail to Messina with that aim, and are praying God for success," wrote the Pope. On 5th Ides of July the Pope wrote to the Viceroy of Naples that the Papal ships were already awaiting the arrival of Philibert of Savoy, commander of the royal fleet, to sail with him, when news came of 6 Turkish ships being off the coast of Sicily. Again on the Nones of February 1615; and again (vol. 11) on the eve of the Nones of January 1616, Briefs to the king of Spain about fleet movements. Again 9.5.1620 (vol. 14, p. 20) about sending ships for the Christian cause.

² 'Grandfather', more correctly.

"are to be used, and that they wished them well and no boon greater than the salvation of their souls, and for this had spoken so freely about Catholic truth."

The account left by Fr. Vincent began by explaining that the audience was, as far as the English were concerned, to enable them to present certain gifts: he concluded it by returning to that matter:

"What the English presented to the Shah was as follows:

"1500 arquebuses: two complete sets of armour for jousting, the one tooled and engraved: a coach, lined with crimson damask, with four horses: two dozen large and medium-sized mirrors.

"Of all this he accepted only the arquebuses. He tried on the gauntlets, armlets and the breastplate of the armour and, saying that it was more hindrance than help in fighting, did not want it.

"He went to see the coach and, feigning not to understand for what it was used, he desired the English Agent and his companions to take a turn in it through the garden and, when they returned where the Shah stood, he told them to keep it for themselves. For, he said, he did not want such an invention; because he was not a piece of stone which had to be carried about in a cart, but preferred to ride on horseback until he died, and that all his people were of like mind."

Within two months of those asseverations of respect for Jesus, the fickle monarch, presumably instigated, had let loose a persecution of Christians. Wandering one day, incognito and almost alone, in the open country towards Chaharmahal he overheard some Armenian girls chattering together and using hard and rude words about himself. Always greedy of praise and affection, and in his vanity considering that he deserved to be belauded, he was consumed with rage and ordered all Armenians of the villages in the vicinity to be forced to become Muslims. With such vigour was the order executed, the males being made to undergo circumcision, that some from the pain and from the affliction of their hearts quitted this life. Crosses, liturgical books, priestly vestments were carried off from the churches, altars profaned. The Shah added a device to compel both males and females to apostatize, which has truly been judged diabolical: for he took their wives from the Armenians and gave them to Shiah Persians, and he mated the wives of the latter to Armenians.¹ This persecution, begun in five villages, was later extended to a total of forty-three in the district and created an indescribable commotion among all Armenians, for those of Julfa apprehended an inclusion of their town in the zone of forced conversion. An account² of it was taken down by one of the Carmelites from a certain Khwajeh Virdi, an Armenian of the town:

"On the morning of Friday, the 7th August of the year 1621, the second³ persecution began. The principal cause was the secret hatred which the Shah has" (for the Christian faith) "and which was fomented by a great Mulla named Shaikh Baha-ud-Din, who said that it was expedient that all Christians should be made Muslims: and this Mulla, or Doctor, died while the king was making Muslims of the Christians. The news of this persecution was sent to Khwajeh Virdi by Hurijan, *rais*⁴ of one of those hamlets, through one of his men, and he wrote that they were forcibly making Muslims of all those Christians, giving them many blows with sticks and torturing them, and that in particular they had maltreated himself, Hurijan, as being the head and the one who most resisted, and three times so that he was in great danger of dying: he wrote that the Muslims had done the same in 43 places: and he asked for advice—what he should do, whether abandon his children and flee, and what was to be done with the people.

¹ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, book 4, part 2.

² The first took place in October 1613, when the Shah compelled those Armenians who owed him money to pay or apostatize—as already related.

³ O.C.D. 236 a.

⁴ Literally, 'head'.

"Khvajeh Viridi sent answer to Hurijan that, if he fled, his children and the village people, whom God had committed to his charge, would fall into the hands of the Muslims and become renegades from our holy Faith, and put it to him 'what reply would he have to make in the presence of Christ'. He further sent and told him that, to remedy this state of affairs, it was requisite that in each place they should leave 5 or 6 persons as a guard, while Hurijan with the heads of the other places and all the people, men, women, big and small, should come in to Isfahan, and present themselves at the king's gate, and say to him: 'O king! to send and tell us to abandon our religion is tyranny and violence. . . . If the king wishes to kill us, we are ready to die for the Faith of Christ. This is my opinion,' said Khvajeh Viridi to Hurijan, 'and that you should remain strong in the faith of Christ and fear not to die for it. . . .'

"Copies of this letter, taken in triplicate, were carried round the three villages called Iskandarieh, Parwari and Parhiz, and these three copies were read in all the places and hamlets, from each of which there set out two, three or four persons, totalling in all 150, among those being one vartapet, two priests and the rest laymen. Then when these 150 persons arrived Khvajeh Viridi reproached them, telling them that they had not been steadfast in the Faith and all come, as he had written them, to the gate of the king's palace. For answer they said . . . 94 of us have made profession of that accursed religion, and are sorry for it and wish to die. Fifty did not make the profession (of the Muhammadan religion), because they fled away from the hamlets: and they are come with us: and we are all here, ready to do what you bid us.

"Khvajeh Viridi told them: 'What I counsel you is to go, the 150, just as you are, every day to the gate of the king's palace, until you get speech with him and are able to tell him that you will not abandon your faith, but wish to die for Christ and his religion—the Shah may do what he will with your heads, and you are ready for him to cut them off your shoulders.'

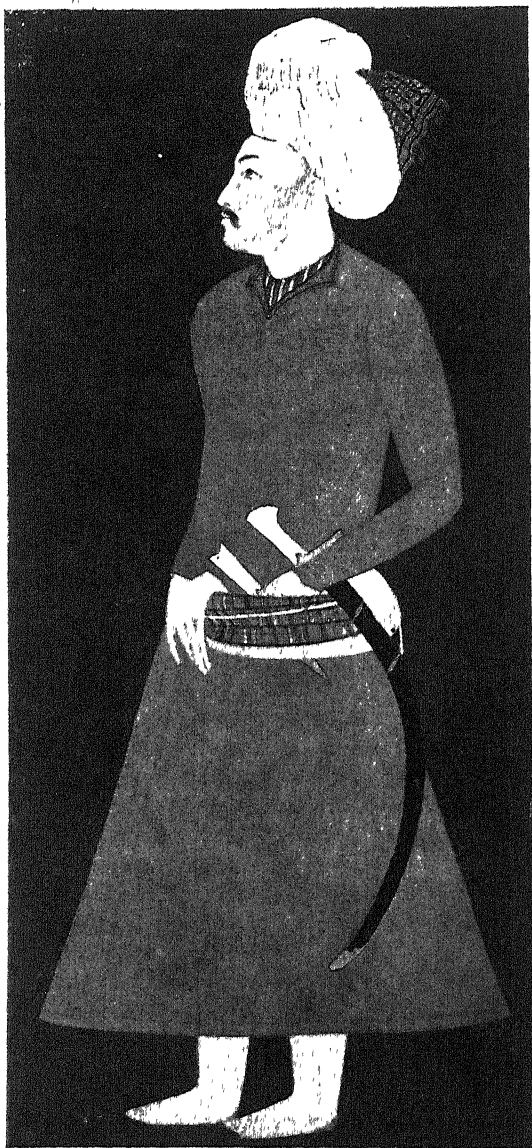
"They continued for 20 days to go to the gate of the king's palace; but, although the Shah knew of it, he would not give them audience and pretended not to know about it.

"When they saw this they drew up a petition and gave three copies to the officials at the gate, so that it might reach the king. The substance of the memorial was this, that they begged the Shah not to use force with them, asserting that they were his vassals, rendered him service, paid their tribute: they said that their possessions and lives were at his service . . . but that their Faith belonged to Christ, God: that he was doing them injustice in seeking to deprive them of their religion: what they had already done" (i.e. those who had apostatized) "had been under *force majeure* and against their will, which was now—they declared—to abide in the Faith of Christ and die for it. The king might do whatever he pleased, but not take on himself this sin—he should allow them to live as Christians and order that their sacred books be restored to them, when they would ever pray for his safety. Many of their race, because of the fame of the justice and good treatment which his Highness used towards Christians, from the lands of the Turks fled thence to his Highness' protection. Now, if he treat them ill, they would once more flee wherever they might obtain better treatment.

"They waited another 20 days, and no reply reached them. Seeing that, the 150 persons went to interview the great officials and favourites of the Shah, saying to them that for 40 days past they had wanted to have audience of the king and had been unable to do so: so they warned them that all the people in their villages were fleeing away, and the king should be informed: complaint should not be made later, since they were fulfilling their obligations and would answer that they had given notice.

"After another five days the officials verbally replied that they (the Armenians) might depart in peace: what the Shah had done had been in anger: that it was nothing, and they could remain as they had been previously, and no one would molest them.

"At this juncture the Shah fell ill. Twelve of the 150 persons went to ask the advice of Khvajeh Viridi. He told them that the unmarried and those without children had



KHUDABANDEH MIRZA

A miniature in the Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, London (No. 1920-9-17-013 (24)), by the Indian artist Bishndas, who went to Persia with the embassy from the Mogul Court and painted it before 1619.

[By permission of the Trustees]

"better return to their own country in Armenia: those married should retract and be reconciled (to Christianity) and make a confession. and that, if the Muslim Mullas were to come among them to circumcise them, or perform the practices of Islam, such men should be driven away with blows and sticks from their villages. . . ."

"With this reply they went off. Before they reached their district two Christian women died, and the Muslim Mullas took them off to bury them: when the (twelve) men got back, a girl aged 15 died and the Mullas in question went to bury her. The head of the place called on the people to chase them away with blows, and this was done, the people saying that by the grace of God they were Christians and did not believe in the Muhammadan faith and, using many bad words, ejected them half dead from the blows received. Six individuals, relatives of the Mullas, came and put them on two donkeys and said they were going to complain to the Shah: and they proceeded one day's journey on the way. The Christians did not move and merely answered they they might go to the Shah and make any complaints they liked. The Mullas and their people took counsel together, reflecting that they had not gone there by express orders of the Shah, and it might be that he was by then in another frame of mind, and would have them put to death in order to give satisfaction to the Christians. So they considered it might be better to return home, as they did. . . . Khwajeh Viridi sent them a silver cross and a pair of small bells to serve for their churches and incense, so that they might hold a procession, confess the Christian faith and return thanks."

The above account, if lengthy, will have served to give a picture of conditions during that reign (and indeed of Persian mass reaction to oppression up till recent years). While forcible conversion lasted the Carmelites did all they could to exhort the Armenians to stand steadfast in the Christian faith, going about among them. Through the Armenians the Shah derived personal profit from the silk trade and, having become aware of the commotion caused among the community in Julfa too, and that their caravans laden with merchandise had halted on the roads, he returned to the Court at Isfahan, 20.8.1621, and, sending for Khwajeh Nazar, a leader of the race, gave him assurances that he would not molest the Armenians further on account of their religion. Some forty-five families of Assyrians, i.e. Chaldaeans, also suffered in this persecution, thirty of whom became renegades and Shiah: of the remaining twenty-five seven left Isfahan, but the others stood firm and with their priest were gained to the Catholic faith. Though in time 'Abbas I went so far as to say that he would not be displeased, were those forcibly converted to revert to Christianity, he showed his annoyance with the Carmelites for encouraging resistance by procrastinating in giving a reply to the Brief from the Pope brought by the Visitor General.

Whether before, during that persecution (which by deduction from the two dates given occurred between 7th and 20th August 1621), or when it was over, 'Abbas I was passing the summer at Ab-i-Kurang, where Fr. Vincent of S. Francis attempted to find him in order to obtain his *congé*. But that summer residence was hurriedly abandoned because of the tragic incident of Khudabandeh Mirza¹, the elder of the two surviving sons of the jealous monarch. The Carmelite chronicler, from original material no longer to be traced, merely noted that on some slight suspicion 'Abbas I had this son blinded, a white-hot silver dagger being passed before his eyes, and that, in pity, the executioners had not left the youth altogether blind, but so that he could distinguish objects as it were shadows. It was not long before, thinking to avenge himself, the unfortunate prince fled from Isfahan, and it was in order to pursue Khudabandeh that the despotic father suddenly left Ab-i-Kurang. Many who had aided this son were put to death: and, after being himself captured, Khudabandeh Mirza was shut up by his father and never seen again by the public.

¹ See the miniature on the opposite page. There is another portrait, clearly of the same individual, in a collection of Mogul portraits recently brought to light in the Gulistan Museum at Tihiran; and in the long notice by Madame Godard in No. 2, vol. 2 of the periodical *Athar-i-Iran*, No. 98, it has in the margin in handwriting known to be that of the Mogul Emperor Jahangir the words "Shabih pisr-i-Shah baradarm Shah 'Abbas Khudabandeh Mirza 'amal-i-Bishndas" i.e. "likeness of the son of the king my brother Shah 'Abbas Khudabandeh Mirza, the work of Bishndas".

Meanwhile, between June and September of 1621 the tension at Hurmuz became more acute, for the Captain of the fortress had erected a fort near the springs of fresh water on Qishm Island, and the Shah had caused one of the Augustinian Fathers, Fr. Nicolas Parete, to proceed from Isfahan to Hurmuz to convey his protest and ask whether the Portuguese wanted war. Persian forces must have been collected and moved towards the coast, if not actual hostilities have begun, by mid-September, for there is on record the following declaration:¹

"We, the undersigned Fathers, certify that our reverend Fr. Vincent of S. Francis, "Visitor General, having consulted us whether he should continue his journey to Hurmuz "and India, or return to Rome, we were of opinion that, since *the passes are now closed by "the war between the Portuguese and the Khan*" (i.e. of Shiraz) "*together with the English* and, as "he has been unable to obtain a permit from the king to pass through, and for many other "reasons which we have and the Father himself will state verbally, it was not expedient "that the said reverend Father should proceed to India, but that it would be to the greater "service of God that he should return to Rome and report to the reverend Father Prae- "positus and the Definitory General. In faith and testimony of that opinion and that it "is the truth we subscribe our names. Given at the Convent of Jesus and Mary of the "Discalced Carmelites at Isfahan, 23.9.1621.

"(sd) fr. Prosper of the Holy Spirit

"fr. Dimas of the Cross

"fr. Jhoan Thaddeus of S. Elisaeus."

A change had already come over the attitude of Shah 'Abbas towards the Carmelite representatives of the Pope: on 8.9.1621 the new Prior was denouncing him in a letter² to Rome:

"We are in the country of the greatest tyrant the Church has had since it began until "our own times: for the methods he adopts are taken from hell. Since our arrival he has "had enslaved 39 villages, and had the wives of Christians given to Muslims, and those of "Muslims to Christians: and he leaves them neither churches nor priests—things that may "not be done according to the Quran, say his Persian and Muslim legal luminaries. . . ."

Again, 27.9.1621,³ to Fr. Paul Simon, then second Definitory General in Rome:

"The king . . . does not appear to be as he used to be till recently in giving us audience, "having thought for us and taking account of us. Now it seems he is all for the English, "with whose aid, it is much to be feared, he wants to have a total breach with the Portu- "guese and make war on Hurmuz. There is little at which to be happy, seeing that the "Portuguese, from what can be gathered, are few in number in their sea and land" (forces), "and there is little unity among them . . ."

and on 20.10.1621:

". . . The king is behaving in such a way that he has not been willing to reply to the "Pope, nor to speak to us, although he has seen us several times. . . ."

By December of that year (2.12.1621) Fr. Prosper informed the Praepositus General that:

'no news was likely to come from Hurmuz and Goa or Tatta in Sind for another 3 years, 'as the roads were all blocked by troops.'

Shortly afterwards, indeed, the English Agents of the East India Company and 'Abbas I

in particular attained their objective, though Imam Quli Khan of Shiraz was the moving spirit and organizer of the *coup*; for the record of the Company relates:

"In December 1621" (? *sic*, the instrument being dated 10th Rabi' I, 1031 A.H., the date should be presumably on or about 23.1.1622) "Edward Monox, agent for the East India Company and Thomas Rastell, the President of the same, treated with the king of Persia in the name of his Majestie of England and concluded the ensuing articles:

- "(1) that for the assistance of the English shippes against the Portuguese in Hurmuz and "Qishm (who exacted upon both nations) halfe the spoile of Hurmuz (when taken) "should be devided to the English and halfe to the Persians,
- "(2) that the castle of Hurmuz should be garrisoned by halfe English and halfe Persians,
- "(3) that the Ports and Castles taken in India should be equally divided betwixt them,
- "(4) that all shippes for India as well as English or Persian should be for ever Customs "free,
- "(5) that all strangers' Customs should be for ever equally devided betwixt English and "Persians,
- "(6) that all Christian captives should be at the disposall of the English and the Mussle- "men at the Persians, except Ruy Frera Captain of Qishm Castle and Simon de "Melo Captain of Hurmuz, who were to be delivered to the Persians,
- "(7) that all expense of ammunitiion, victuall, and other provision should be borne "equally by both nations. . . ."

Messrs. Monox and Bell arranged the terms of alliance not in Isfahan but with the Khan of Shiraz (Imam Quli Khan), who had his quarters at Minab: and on 19.1.1622 they set sail from Kuhistak.

Early in 1622, then, disaster overtook the missionaries from two different angles and sources. A short list of the first baptisms at the Carmelite convent, in the writing of Fr. John Thaddeus apparently, records that on the "day of St. Thomas the Apostle, 1618" (i.e. December 21st) there was baptized "Elias Cainoni, a Persian from Luristan": and "on the day of the Cross, September 1619" (i.e. September 14th) "Khatchatur" (an Armenian word that means 'The Cross gave'), "a Persian of Luristan, brother of the wife of Elias Cainoni." On 28.11.1621¹ there had also been baptized three other Muslim converts, who were given the names of: Ibrahim, Yusuf, Iskandar (i.e. Abraham, Joseph, Alexander), the last-mentioned being a Kurd.² Aware that the mind of the Shah had turned against the 'Franks', and fearing persecution the three converts before long desired to make their way to Hurmuz and asked for letters of recommendation.

"I sent them to Hurmuz," wrote the Prior, "and Fr. John Thaddeus gave them letters "of recommendation for our Fathers there, so that they might be given instruction in the "Catholic Faith with more security, Hurmuz being Christian territory."

"They persuaded Ilyas (i.e. Elias), who had been gardener of the convent, to go with 'them as guide, and it was he who carried the letters of Fr. John Thaddeus, in which 'testimony was given of their having all been baptized, and their Muhammadan and 'Christian names were specified.

'In Isfahan relatives of some of the men made an outcry over their disappearance: a 'cousin of Ibrahim went after him and, when the party were some ten days out from 'Isfahan, caught him up and took him back, and the other two recent converts were then 'persuaded by the gardener to return too, in view of the risk in getting through the lines 'of the soldiery.³ Ilyas, the gardener, himself however kept on to Shiraz, where his brother-'in-law, Khatchatur, was then living: and the two determined to try and cross the lines. 'God permitted' (as the Prior's account reads) 'that between Shiraz and the coast the

¹ See *En Persia*, p. 123, quoting Fr. Prosper.

² MSS. *Hist Miss.*, chap. XI, book 4, part 2.

³ *Vide* list of baptisms, mentioned above.

'two should fall in not only with Persian soldiery, but with a party of English, one of whom recognized Ilyas and denounced him to the viceroy as a Christian and servant of the Carmelites of Isfahan. When interrogated and put to the torture Ilyas declared that he was a "Frank": asked to speak a European language he explained that he was a "Frank" by religion. Khatchatur boldly admitted to Imam Quli Khan that he was a Christian and on his way to Hurmuz. The letters of Fr. John Thaddeus found on them gave the names of himself and of his companions from Isfahan, and stated that they were converts. The English agent translated the letters in his own fashion, and these were then forwarded to the Shah. Imam Quli Khan proceeded to employ blandishments to get the two men to recant, and during eight days they were kept in prison, subjected to grievous treatment. As they persisted in their new creed Imam Quli Khan had then taken to Gāmburun, opposite Hurmuz, so that they might be put to death in the sight, almost, of the Christians there. They were eight days on the road, encouraging each other as they went. Arrived at the sea-shore the executioners, finding the two men steadfast in refusal to deny Christ and acknowledge Muhammad, first had an ass killed and skinned, and then Ilyas tightly sewn up in the skin. Then he was transfixed by an iron stake, driven into the earth. In this torment it is recorded that the brave convert lived for three hours praising God and asking pardon for his executioners. Khatchatur, the brother-in-law, a witness of such horrible sufferings, but not deterred by them and constant in his refusals, was affixed to the same stake and then had his abdomen slit open, was disembowelled, and left to die painfully.¹

Meanwhile the news and intercepted letters of Fr. John Thaddeus had reached Shah 'Abbas, and the three other converts, Ibrahim, Yusuf and Iskandar were arrested and, unable to deny that they had been with Ilyas and Khatchatur, put in prison. Leaving orders with his justiciars as to the action to take with the missionaries the Persian sovereign left the city, 14.2.1622, and went to stay some six miles away. When the Daruga of the city and the Lieutenant of Police, together with an armed body of men, presented themselves at the door of the convent, the Prior, Fr. Prosper, summoned by the porter, sent for Fr. John Thaddeus as the best linguist. The latter at once learnt the matter and warned the Prior that two converts had been caught with the letters he had had written to Hurmuz. With much courtesy, despite the unwillingness of the king's officers, the Fathers persuaded them to enter the refectory and partake of some refreshment: then they were asked their numbers, the names of all the Religious and seculars in the house. Having taken down this in writing, the officers left the refectory, shutting all in it except Fr. John Thaddeus who accompanied them on their inspection of the premises. They proceeded to bind Bastian, a Christian layman from Hurmuz, then staying in the convent, and Abdullah, son of the martyred Ilyas: they sealed up all doors of all the cells and the church. In the interval Frs. Dimas and Basil had returned from Julfa, whither the Prior had sent them on an errand. Warned by Christians in houses adjacent of what had happened and urged to hide at the Augustinian convent or elsewhere, these two Carmelites declined to be separated from their brethren, and so entered while guards were sealing up the doors. Fr. Basil happened to be still fasting and at the Prior's order managed by way of Lay Brother Diego's cell to enter the church and consume the Most Holy Sacrament to prevent possible profanation. When Fr. John returned from accompanying the Daruga round the premises, the missionaries sought and obtained permission to have their breviaries and to have the domestic offices opened.

'After an interrogatory they prepared to die. But the guards stopped the Carmelites from saying prayers together, apprehending that the Fathers might cast some spells.'

¹ There is a variant to this account in another letter of Fr. Prosper, writing six months later, viz. 22.11.1622:

"We have been diligent to know how Elias, the gardener, died, but, having been prisoners and unable to communicate with anyone up to now, could learn nothing. . . . He was condemned to be impaled in front of Hurmuz. He remained alive for two days, calling on Jesus Mary and making the sign of the cross, and being in this pass, they fired a musket at him and hit him in the heart. Afterwards they cut off the head of an ass, and put him in its skin, sewn well, and stood him upright in the middle of the fort at Gāmburun, tied to a great stake, where he is still kept, so that he may be taken off with the plunder from Hurmuz, when the king comes."

"But we did as Daniel did. Your Reverences," wrote Fr. Prosper in his subsequent report of 10.3.1622 to Rome, "may imagine in what case we were—the house full of guards and "the doors closed, while we were preparing ourselves to go to die. The first day we read "the life of S. Ignatius the martyr, the second that of S. Laurence, the third that of S. "Catharine: and we began to taste the consolations that on such occasions God granted in "ancient times. By the munshi of the Daruga the Shah sent to Fr. John the intercepted "letters (which Fr. John Thaddeus had written to Fr. Balthasar, to the Captain of Hurmuz "and to Captain Ruy Freire, who is the one who was the cause of the war) with the message "that Fr. John should examine and declare whether these were in his own handwriting "and well translated into Persian (by the English factory agent, who had denounced Ilyas), "or otherwise himself make a translation: the Shah added to the message that Fr. John "Thaddeus should also recount the favours received at his (the Shah's) hands and say "whether such proceedings were the return he made for the bread and salt they had eaten "together.

"The Father translated the letters very differently to the version by the Englishman " ("Tell the king that it is my letter," he said, "but it has been badly translated: take down in "writing what I shall faithfully interpret"): and he sent a reply to the effect that he was "very sensible of all the favours and respect his Highness had invariably paid them: that "it was true he had baptized these five men, and in reply to the question why he had done "so he would ask in return why the Shah was making Muslims of so many Christians. "Just as the Shah was working in the cause of Muhammad, so he was for that of Christ. "All who might come to him and request to become Christians he would receive, because "he came to the country for no other objective.

"The Shah was pleased to see the letters thus translated and have the reply: and, turning "to the Mullas, who to the number of more than 200 had come to complain¹ to his Majesty "that the Muhammadan religion was being ruined and demand our death, alleging that "we had sent more than 5,000 persons away to Christian lands, he treated them curtly, "remarking that the Father was right, and that in all the years he had dealt with him he "had never found him to lie."

The Shah had had Iskandar (Alexander) stoned forthwith,² because, when the three converts were first taken before him, he confessed outright to being a Christian. Another letter of Fr. Prosper, 11.4.1622, tells:

"As to Alexander, who was the man whom the king ordered to be stoned and burnt "directly he said he was a Christian, till now we have been unable to get news . . . it "happened outside the city" (i.e. at the camp where the Shah was about to start on campaign). "Only we know for certain that his body is guarded, and he is considered a "Christian. . . ."

The MSS. *Hist. Miss.* adds the information that the body of Alexander was not burnt, as

¹ The MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 11, book 4, points out that one reason for the severity was that in 1621 Pietro della Valle (as he himself recounts) one day had a religious disputation with a Mulla and, on returning home, drew up in Persian a thesis on the points disputed and, after submitting it to the Religious communities, sent it to the Mulla. The Mulla replied with a volume against the Christian Faith, while the Shiah priesthood as a whole made an outcry to the Shah, reproaching him for lack of zeal in his own religion. The incident and revelation by Fr. John Thaddeus' letters of his activities and conversions in their midst gave them the opportunity, when they went to bid 'Abbas I farewell on his departure for the campaign against Kandahar, to accuse the Carmelites of having baptized not five, but 7,000 Muslims, and they depicted the future as gloomy.

² Fr. John Thaddeus' long 'Report' on the Persian Mission to Rome of 1624 (*S.R.*, vol. 209) defends 'Abbas I:

"So not only do the notables, who are many in number, favour the Fathers and know that their object is to make men "Christians, but even the Muslims and the Shah himself know this too, and he has *shown no other sign* of hostility except "to have killed those four martyrs out of the five Christian Persians who were taken on the road to Hurmuz. He did "this *not so much* because they had become Christians as for reasons of state, and because his arrangement with the "English for their help in the capture of Hurmuz had become disclosed, and it seemed to the king that this should "not pass without some such demonstration."

the sentence was carried out at night, and wood was not to be found. The main account by Fr. Prosper goes on:

"The Shah had (by this time) eight men under arrest, among them the two returned converts who, unaware of the written information about them the Shah held in his hands, denied at first that they were such: to make certain he had them sent to Fr. John Thaddeus for identification: and, while we were still confined, the executioners arrived at the convent having brought attached by a chain eight catechumens, among them two, Ibrahim and Yusuf, who had been baptized, with a message to the effect that those whom the Father said were not Christians he would allow to go free. I (Fr. Prosper is writing) went out to meet them, accompanied by Frs. John and Balthazar. The (former) Father began to exhort the men, saying that it behoved them to confess in public that they were Christians, since the Christian religion did not allow denial. He spoke words of comfort to them, saying that these were men whom he had baptized, for their names both as Christians and when Muslims were known to the Shah. To his exhortation Yusuf said: 'I came but a single time to this house.' Fr. John replied: 'My son, thou knowest the times thou camest. What I tell thee is that whoever is a Christian ought to confess it without fear of death.' After many other words he embraced Ibrahim and Yusuf, saying: 'These are my Christians.' Yusuf burst into tears at seeing himself found out, for in the king's presence both he and Ibrahim had denied being Christians. It was a remarkable thing to see how the gaolers were encouraging the men to die for their new faith, the one saying that they should not be afraid of death, as no other lot awaited all human beings — 'if you be Christians, say so and go to your death in the Christian religion': while the other observed: 'Death is over in a moment: you will go with gladness.' . . .

"Father John called aside the officers of justice, and begged them to try and get the men released without regard for the cost, as he would arrange to make it good to them: and they all promised. And so the Christians went off, more reassured. This happened at one hour after nightfall. We returned to saying the office of Matins for, as I said, the other Fathers were waiting for us without having proceeded farther, seeing how apposite were the verses we were reciting when we went out: 'Introduxisti nos in laqueum, posuisti tribulationes in dorso nostro, imposuisti homines super capita nostra.' . . .

"On Wednesday, the 16th February, very early, as we were at morning prayer, at which was read the life of S. Catharine, virgin and martyr, the same officers of justice returned with the eight men on a chain and called us to the gate: and we, Fr. John and I, went out. While Fr. John once more spoke to the officers of justice" (asking that) "the two Christians be set at liberty in return for a considerable sum of money, I went to see whether anything could be found to give to eat to those poor prisoners: and, finding nothing but bread, I carried it to them in my scapular. The rest would not touch it, thinking it might be considered a manifest sign of their being Christians, but only Yusuf and Ibrahim with glad faces took it and gave some to Bastian Diaz, who was also on the chain with them. Thereupon they were taken away to Daulatabad, where the Shah was, a place some three leagues outside Isfahan. God permitted that He should be all the more glorified because they went confessing the Faith in front of all the city and the king. Bastian Diaz encouraged them a great deal (on the way). In the end the Shah ordered them to be stoned to death, and he sent a crier around all the city calling on those who loved Muhammad to assemble with stones to kill those who had abjured him. They came to the place where they were to be stoned, and the Justiciar, i.e. Daruga (who is a renegade Georgian) harangued them and together with the Mullas present begged them to confess the Muhammadan religion. . . . And so Yusuf stood while they stoned him and, when his head was split open, said that he felt no pain. The other, not having cared to make a profession of Faith when they tied him up, said to the executioners that he pardoned them and begged that the Lord would not require an account of his blood. In short they were stoned to death and afterwards were burnt, and guards set on the bodies, so that the Christians should not

"remove them. The Daruga greatly regretted that he had had them executed because 'he had not thought they would be so brave. Everyone was saying 'their faith is stronger 'than ours' . . .

" . . . On Thursday morning, the 17th February, after we had finished prayers, in which the life of S. Ignatius the martyr had been read, 'Abdullah a Christian servant in our house arrived and told us that the two Christian converts had been already taken out of the prison to be executed: so I told him to return and see how they died and inform us: while we all turned to prayer. . . . So we began to repeat the 'Pater noster . . . sanctificetur 'nomen Tuum' until 'Abdullah returned and related to us how they stoned and then set on fire the two Christians, and how the latter had confessed Jesus Christ . . . and the Daruga of the city, who came to see us, and the guards we had at the gate and many other Christians who had been present told us the same. We therefore said the 'Te 'Deum laudamus', although it had been prohibited that we should recite the rosary or say prayers, for they thought that we might contrive some enchantment, so that they could not kill our Christians.

"The same day they opened the church and our cells for us: and, when we had recom-pensed them as best we could, the guards went away and we began our regular exercises. At night I sent Brother Diego clothed in lay dress to see in what state the bodies of the two Christians had remained and whether, if possible, he could bring what he could of them. But he returned without having succeeded in doing anything. Then I sent the lieutenant of police a message by a relative of his, asking for the bodies of the Christians to be given us and promising to remunerate him fittingly. He marvelled on hearing my request and said: 'The trust in their Faith of the Christians is great indeed that, when they have suffered such a trial as this, they should yet ask me for the bodies of the Christians.' However he answered very courteously that he was unable to comply with our request. Later, however, we arranged with a relative of his to give him one Tuman, i.e. 17 scudi, and bring them to us. And so it was done, for one night he brought us the body of Ibrahim half burnt and without the head. The body of Yusuf had been taken by other Christians, and I understand the guards were well paid."¹

The Prior was careful to take the deposition of another witness, and there exists in the archives of the Order² the following statement by:

"Francisco Souza, a native of Hurmuz, who deposed and declared on oath, according to the legal forms, what he saw and heard about the deaths of Ibrahim and Yusuf, the Christian Persians: and the said Prior caused the witness to swear on the crucifix and holy Gospels to tell the truth . . . he said that, being in the service of the chief magistrate and the prison in the same building, he was present and saw them taken out of prison and had accompanied them to the place of execution . . . and was present when they were stoned and burnt. . . . The chief crier of the city on horseback went through the city and all the main streets, calling out in a loud voice that it was the king's command that all the people and faithful Muhammadans, and those who loved their religion should take stones and come with these to the gallows-place and kill by a shower of stones and burn two infidels who had abandoned the Muhammadan and embraced the Christian religion.

" . . . Along the road . . . the Muslims were urging them to adopt the Muhammadan faith, as it was better than that of Christ (they said), the Muhammadan religion being good, the Christian bad.

"Ibrahim answered nothing, but Yusuf said that he was to die for Christ. Taken on foot all the way, with their hands tied behind them, their heads bare, and each of them with two men holding them fast by the shoulders, when they arrived at the place of

¹ The preceding narrative is based on the letter of Fr. Prosper, 10.3.1622, O.C.D. 238 d., and on the account in *En Persia*, also taken from Fr. Prosper's letters, *vide* pp. 125-32.

² O.C.D. 238 d. (Fr. Prosper).

"execution they were tied back to back, a rope being put over their breasts which bound the two bodies, thrown on their sides on the ground. Afterwards each of them was again bound with a cord from the neck to the feet as tightly as could be. When they were in such case, the chief magistrate sent to tell and persuade them to make the profession of the Muhammadan faith—the 'Shahadat' or testifying to the Muhammadan religion. Yusuf answered: 'Now it is time for dying and telling the truth. We have abandoned the Muslim religion and hold the Christian faith. Now, do what you will.' When this answer had been given, the sheriff and lieutenant of police bade the people stone them. When seven or eight stones had struck Yusuf's head, he said: 'Throw what you will, it does not hurt me at all.' When he said this, his skull was already fractured. Hearing those words, a porter took a heavy stone and, drawing near him, brought it down on his head, so that he did not speak again and died. The sheriff and lieutenant went, leaving orders for them to be burnt: and, when the fire had been lighted, they were burnt. And this is what I know as an eye-witness, it being agreed on all hands by the people that they had not said the 'Shahadat' (which is the Muslim symbol of faith) and had died infidels: and for that reason the sheriff and lieutenant of police forbade their being given burial and ordered that they be left for the dogs to eat. . . ."

After Alexander had been stoned, but before the other two men had suffered, on 16.2.1622 Shah 'Abbas left his temporary residence outside Isfahan for the campaign against Kandahar, which his forces were already besieging,

"having given instructions that nothing should be done to us, but respect paid and that we should be allowed to say our prayers, giving it to be understood that what he had done he had been compelled to do. But, as we remained in the hands of officials and the king was so far away, they set a guard on us, asserting that it was by the Shah's order. . . . We have remained following our Observance arranging that, as we could not go out to preach, we should preach to those who came to us. For we have gained a number of poor people and good Christians through the persecution which in prosperity would hardly have been the case. . . . The Augustinian Fathers are at present in great trouble: the guards wanted to turn them out of their house, solely because they (the Fathers) did not receive them with a little hospitality, or give them anything to eat." (The Carmelites had no money, but handed over to their guards a mirror and a mule.) "This guard is more like a Mihmandar" (to us). "It is to the great glory of God to see the sentiments of the city in general, for all thought we had died after various kinds of torture. . . . We have our bells, as previously, and are very contented, as it right we should be. . . . We have a . . . district and 43 villages of Christians who had become Muslims. With this example" (i.e. of the martyrs) "they are all ready to die for Christ, and the Shah has ordered that everyone should live according to his own religious faith, and that their books be given back to them.¹ . . . We are now seeking money for food. This persecution has consumed a good deal, and we are much in debt to the relatives of the martyrs. . . . We can already send you relics of the martyrs, as much as you desire: *one body we have in the house, and part of the head of the other.* . . ."²

Despite their reclusion and straitened circumstances the Carmelites at Isfahan had celebrated "as best we could" the canonization of the Reformer of their Order, S. Teresa, and, directly they were able that autumn of 1622, they sent off Fr. Dimas of the Cross with a companion into the district of Chaharmahal to try and win back the 43 villages which as previously related had been forced into partial apostasy by the violence of the Shah in 1621. For seven months the two Religious led a life of missionary sacrifice: they did not enter houses for food,

¹ By these letters of 1622 the narrative of the Armenian Khwajeh Virdi, it would seem, should not be taken as meaning that the inhabitants of the 43 villages in 1621 had *all* returned to the Christian Faith: many or most, evidently, were still in the toils late in 1622.

² Fr. Prosper, O.C.D. 238 d., letter 10.3.1622.

but lived on what was offered them as alms. They slept on straw in the village churches or outside. In the mornings Fr. Dimas celebrated Mass in the open, and then they taught the children Christian doctrine. They spent the rest of the day in persuasion and confession of those remaining in the villages. In the evenings, when the men returned from field work, a sermon was preached. As one village after another was by such means brought back to the Christian Faith the church was blessed, a priest of sound tenets appointed, and then the Carmelites passed on to another village. It took them seven months to gain twelve of the villages: but others of their own accord sent their headman to the convent.¹

It would appear from remarks in various letters that the Carmelites had their movements restricted, were under detention in the convent from February to October 1622: yet they were not dismayed:

"11.4.1622. Although we are indoors, unable to go out, with a guard on the gate, 'they give us no trouble over reciting the Divine Office. We ring our bells (we have very 'good ones), as if we were in Rome. . . . The Fathers of S. Augustine are under another 'guard, but are making converts of their guards.' . . .

"14.6.1622. . . . until the king come back we think we shall stay as we are now—in 'prison. . . . Three more were baptized on S. John's day, two being given the name of 'Ilyas, one of Yusuf. . . ."

"22.10.1622. On the 8th of this month the guards were taken off the gate, the Daruga 'having received orders that no one should molest us. . . ."²

Those five converts were, as far as the lay mind can appreciate, true martyrs of the Church, killed 'in odio fidei', as much as any of the sixteen thousand commemorated as martyrs under Shapur II, or those Christians put to death in the reign of Yazdigird, some thirteen centuries previously. An account of the "Martyrdom of the Five Persians recently baptized by the Discalced Carmelite Fathers at Isfahan"³ was published in Rome by the printing-press of Zannetti in 1622, and translated into French according to a copy printed at Liège.

It does cause surprise that on the materials sent to Rome by the Prior, with this end obviously in his mind, a preliminary enquiry was not held with the object of ultimately recognizing these martyrs as canonized saints in the official martyrology, the more so because in that same year, 1622, the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide had been formed, and, as has been elicited by the author of *En Persia*, in one of its earliest meetings there was presented to the cardinals and members by the Carmelite Fr. Dominic of Jesus Mary,

"a printed leaflet, in which was narrated the moving martyrdom of five Persians, neophytes 'of the Carmelite mission at Isfahan, where they had been martyred the same year, "'in hatred of the Faith', on the evidence of the Acta Congreg. de Propaganda Fide, vol. III."

Some documents may have been lost in the troubled nineteenth century; but some day, it may be, the authorities may trace sufficient evidence in the archives of the Order to put forward the cause of these five humble, but courageous confessors of the Faith. The question arises: 'what became of those relics of the bodies: did they continue to lie in the convent at Isfahan, or were they forwarded to Rome?' It is only answered in part by the letter of Fr. Prosper from Aleppo, 27.2.1625, in which he states that he is taking with him to Rome the book composed by a Mulla against the Catholic Faith (already cited), and

¹ See footnote ¹ on page 264.

² *Vide*, in Arch. Vat., Fondo Borghese, Ser. III, 19, 1, p. 170, the 'Compendio della cose e successi della nostra missione di Persia dall'anno 1621 fino a questo 1625 narrato al nostro Padre Fra Paolo di Giesu Maria, Preposito Generale dei Carmelitani Scalzi dal Padre Fra Prospero', which adds that the official "in charge of the guard to prevent the Fathers leaving the convent was a greedy, bad man, and our Fathers poor, so that for 8 months he gave them much trouble".

³ 'Martirio dei Cinque Persiani nuovamente battezzati delli Padri Carmelitani Scalzi di Haspahan.'

“part of the bones of those two martyrs who died at Isfahan; nothing of the two others
“could be had. . . .”

* * * *

* * *

* *

While this check to their official standing with the Shah and Court was taking place, and the Fathers were confined to the convent, in the South an event fraught with more lasting and deleterious effects had occurred as the sequel to the agreement of January 1622 between the Khan of Shiraz and the Agents of the East India Company. The fort on Qishm island

“having been straightened, the Governor sent to the English to deliver himself into theyre
“handes, who shipped him” (he was Ruy Freire d’Andrada) “and some Maures into theyre
“country, whereat the Persians complain’d, . . .”¹

the water supply of Hurmuz was interrupted, so that on 10.2.1622 the Persians proceeded to land 3,000 men on the island of Hurmuz and occupy the town outside the fortifications. The Portuguese and wealthy inhabitants, with their portable goods, retired into the castle. Ordnance was landed from the English ships and the castle besieged, 17.3.1622. A mine was sprung: parts of the walls on the land side blown down: the Persians made an assault and were repulsed. Then

“Richard Blithe and John Weddell, who commanded the English shipping, . . . fiered,
“sunke and tooke the Portugal fleete—(five gallionnes, one galley and soe many frigitts
“yt we left them destitute wholly of the means of escaping)—and landed theire soldiers
“with those of Hurmuz and tooke the castle.”

On 22.4.1622 (Easter-day was 21st April = 1st May of the new calendar) the castle was surrendered by the Portuguese on condition that the lives of all and the honour of the women should be spared and that they be furnished with shipping to convey them to Masqat or India. Francisco de Souza, the Captain, had been killed. The prizes named *Robert* and *Shulling* were given them, on which more than 2,000 persons departed, another 200 remained on Hurmuz. [The MSS. *Hist. Miss.* account states that “between 300–400 (including women and priests) were left . . . only 15 to 20 unwounded men”.] Two hundred pieces of ordnance were found in the castle: the Portuguese had landed the brass guns from the ships previous to these being destroyed: one frigate had escaped a few nights before the surrender of the castle, and represented a loss in treasure, i.e. prize money, to the English Company of £15,000–£20,000. The English share of the plunder of the port and town was £12,000: in breach of the agreement made (as already recorded) the Persians seized ten parts of the plunder from the town to one actually received by the English Company: as to the castle the position was worse as the Persians conveyed away most of the treasure, yet such of the plunder as was seen by the English was equally divided. In the net result the English obtained some £18,000 in money and ten brass guns to set against the expenses of three months’ operations. On 5.5.1622 there were still 200 Portuguese left in Hurmuz, who owing to want of conveyance had to be supported and fed at the charge of the Company. Having obtained possession of Hurmuz, the Persians failed to keep their engagements, keeping the English out of possession of the castle and anything belonging to it, while on account of powder and water supplied they deducted a half of the three months’ pay due to the English.

The natives taken in the operations were made over to the Persians, who put most of them to death, despite the promise Edward Monox had obtained from the Persian commander that

¹ See *Factory Records of East India Company*.

their lives should be spared. Of the English in the operations only 20 lost their lives, the Persian casualties were put at 1,000. One observer reported that the English sailors were longing for an opportunity for paying the score by attacking their quondam allies: and

"when the general of Shah 'Abbas applied to the English commander to complete their work and necessary assistance by attacking Masqat, the refusal was as emphatic as politeness would allow."¹

The brief notes regarding the siege, which the MSS. *Hist. Miss.* had copied from whatever accounts were recorded at the time by the Carmelites of Hurmuz (unfortunately nothing appears to have survived in the archives of the Order), include the statements that part of the booty which fell to the English was loaded in a ship for London, which however off Masqat took fire and sank, the crew being saved with some difficulty, and that many prisoners of tender age remained in the hands of the Persians, who constrained them to abandon their faith. On the Carmelites the blow fell heavily: all Christian life on the island ceased thereafter: their house had to be left a ruin, with all its furnishings:

"... Now they have told me that there are two Fathers in Hurmuz who have remained behind in the hospital to look after the sick when the town was taken. . . ."²
 "... We lost everything at Hurmuz: our three Religious there came here. . . ."³

Unaided by artillery and ships for fighting the Persians would probably not have obtained possession of Hurmuz—at any rate the fortress: it was in no sense a Persian feat of arms of which they can be proud. The Carmelites make clear what was the general impression created at the time:

"*The English took Hurmuz*; although it is not for them that the king is fortifying the fortress so well. It is said that he has in the town and fortress 4,000 arquebuse men. It has been a great punishment from God for our sins. . . ."⁴

Though their position as representatives of the Sovereign Pontiff had been thus undermined, yet the Carmelites were not downcast, but resilient.

"Although Hurmuz has been taken by the Muhammadans as a chastisement and punishment of the Christians, and we are close pressed on all sides and deprived of all spiritual and financial assistance, courage does not fail us on that account. We now begin to be disciples of Christ."⁵

"We have three catachumens under instruction and cannot take more, though they come from afar off, for it is necessary to house and feed them while under instruction, and we have no funds for that. From four provinces of this kingdom they are asking for us" (to go to them). "On the Feast of the Purification (February 2nd) the procession outside the church was poor, but there was great cheerfulness: all the Catholic Christians present, so that there was not room for all in the church. We rang the bells.⁶ Two Persians from the king's treasury come for instruction. . . ."⁷

Indeed Fr. John Thaddeus rebutted vigorously the insinuation that their business in Persia was solely as representatives of the Pope:

¹ The authorities for the siege of Hurmuz are. the *Comentarios do grande Capitan Ruy Freyre de Andrada*, compiled by Paul Cruesbeck, Lisbon, 1647 and Purchas' 2nd volume (pp. 1787-1815). Quotations have here been made from Sir W. Foster's work on the English Factory records.

² and ⁷ Fr. Prosper, O.C.D. 238 d., undated, but after February 1623.

⁵ Fr. John Thaddeus, O.C.D. 237 c., June 1622.

⁴ *Idem*, 14.6.1622.

⁶ As late as 1907 in some Persian towns bells of Christian churches might not be rung, so strong was local religious objection.

"In order to disabuse some ignorant and impertinent persons I notify your Reverence that it is mere nonsense and madness to think that our Order has been in Persia only on account of the Pontiff and his correspondence with the Shah":¹

and he proceeded to press for the formation of a 'province' of the Persian missions. When Hurmuz fell 'Abbas I was still away in the East:

"... The king went off to Kandahar with a very large army: and they say he has with him 190,000 horse. . . ."²

Later in the year, i.e. before October 1622, he was successful and Kandahar once more changed hands:

"... Having captured Hurmuz, the king has also taken Kandahar, and is somewhere there with his army," wrote Fr. Prosper, 22.10.1622.

From the time of the negotiations with the English³ in 1621 Shah 'Abbas seems to have kept the Carmelites at a distance and no longer to have allowed them to be intimate, or called into counsel.

"For three years past the king has not spoken to us; Your Reverence knows how important are good relations with princes,"

is to be read in Fr. Prosper's letter of 9.7.1624. He had already mentioned in his undated letter, cited above, of 1623:

"A heretic painter is thought to be influencing the king against us. . . ."

In such circumstances it is to be doubted whether the following Brief from Pope Gregory XV was ever presented (unless it were that "matter which caused annoyance to his Majesty", when Fr. Leander had an interview with 'Abbas I in July or August 1626, followed some months later by Fr. John Thaddeus—see Fr. Dimas' letter of 30.5.1627)—a document of much interest because it urged the restitution of Hurmuz to the Portuguese and spoke of dispatching to Persia in this connection that same Fr. Francisco Costa, S.J., whose previous mission had been so indecorously executed and damaging to European and Catholic prestige. In the appendix will be found the Latin text (see too Arch. Secr. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 21, p. 93, No. 116):

"Pope Gregory XV to the most puissant Shah 'Abbas, the illustrious king of the Persians. Most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace.

"The old wisdom of the Greeks so despised the human race as compared with themselves that they called the rest of the nations of the world barbarians and so exalted with such great honours the abilities and talents of their own citizens that they rashly uttered the falsehood that by heaven itself a youth had been sought from a Greek isle to be ruler of the sun and parent of days. Yet they so admired the virtues of the Persians, whose arms they feared, that he who would describe in perpetual literary memorials the pattern of the perfect king cast his eyes nowhere else than on Persia, and therefrom out of the royal dwelling brought into the light of fame Cyrus, that outside nations and the whole of posterity might learn from him the true ways of ruling.

¹ O.C.D. 237 c., 31.8.1624.

² Fr. Prosper, 14.6.1622, O.C.D. 238 d.

³ Not for long were the English in favour: "The king, having finished with the English, is now beginning with the Dutch in these parts and, it is said, has made them captains-general of the straits", *vide* Fr. Prosper, 19.6.1624, and 9.7.1624, O.C.D. 238 d.

“But though the splendours of this race were at one time very great, still the Faith of the Roman Church has decreed triumphs of no lesser magnitude to the Persian virtues. For not a few of those born in those regions, who took the oath of allegiance to Christ, it has honoured with fanes and altars and included in the assemblies of the Saints, those whom We believe to be citizens of heaven and of the household of God and to be set over all the principalities of the world. Hence always fame has attached to the glorious Persian name in the Christian world, and besides there was a certain impression prevailing in the minds of our peoples that between Persian and Christians there was a sort of unwritten treaty of friendship and that the kings of those lands favoured our cause benevolently; and indeed this notion is extraordinarily strengthened by the priests and Religious who return to Italy. For they say that there the power of justice holds sway, the law of hospitality is observed, nor is it from labours on the battlefield alone but also from literary study that glory is sought: that the strongest defence of the royal throne is considered to be equity and mercy. It is nowise strange if with a sort of kindly bias of mind Your triumphs are considered by the whole Christian commonwealth as its own reliefs. Now We on being raised to the Pontifical throne by the goodness of God’s mercy, since the bliss resultant from virtue and the salvation of men ought to be to the glory of Our power, began with ceaseless prayer to beg the Father of mercies to encourage Our fatherly regard by prospering Your Highness.

“But after Your envoy in coming to Us had traversed all the great stretch of countries lying between and had handed over the royal letter whereby You signified Your goodwill for Us and offered Us friendship, as We knew that Pontifical solicitude would not be unwelcome to so great a king, We made up Our mind that henceforth it was meet that Your Highness’ fair fame should be a matter of principal concern to Us.

“For which cause, since the renown of Your royal name and the vastness of Your very celebrated realm not unoften draw Our thoughts thither, We have carefully pondered over the strength of Your power and the reasons for the general liking, so that We might be at last of some use to You. Now We understand that there are two things particularly which procure for You, O most puissant King, such great goodwill of the Christian nations, viz. hatred for the Turks and friendship with the king of Spain. For, being two princes formidable in the wealth of the tribute (you receive) and in the allegiance owned (you by various) races, while you are mutually bound by the salutary bonds of affectionate regard to the human race, you seem to effect a junction of East and West in the might of your power and you twain are able to thrust back the common enemy into his lurking-places in the north-country. Therefore God, the arbiter of treaties and witness in whose hand are the hearts of kings, must be entreated never at any time to allow quarrels to sunder this friendship which unites in amity both continents by the interchange of trade. Since therefore its preservation is the earnest prayer of our peoples and the boon of the Divine clemency, Your Highness can easily conjecture how unwillingly all have heard the report which recently made known that the Portuguese had been attacked by the Persians and the citadel of Hurmuz captured by Your soldiery. Certainly the Tyrant of the Turks who desires and meditates solely Your destruction cannot find a timelier relief to lighten the wretchedness of the Byzantine empire now being rent and torn in pieces.

“For he sees that the danger of ruin looms over himself if, labouring under revolts at home, he sustains the warring might of the Persian king which relies not only on its own strength, great as that is, but which also is fortified by the help and wealth of the allied Spaniards.

“And so We, who have the success of both of You at heart, cannot restrain Our voice in such a great crisis of affairs. The roar of the Ocean and the complaints of navigators do not allow Us to remain quiet in the frightful horror of the storm. Therefore, lest at any time a senseless silence be thrown in Our face, who are watching these perils, We have determined to address Your Highness so that We be seen to have at least brought that much help, which was in Our power, to stay the present ills.

"Hurmuz, as it hitherto has offered hospitable shelter to those sailing in the mouth of that same Persian Gulf, if it be taken away from the Portuguese, will deprive Europe of very great conveniences: yet, on the other hand, it will not bring Your kingdom particular much advantage. For You would be able to use this citadel as though it were Your own, provided that You cultivate the friendship of the Spanish king: and the Spanish soldiers themselves stationed there will guard Your marches and defend Your prestige. On the other hand, if that bulwark, taken by force, be retained by You wrongfully, you will turn a most powerful king from a friend into a foe for Yourself, and it will be at the high price of the pay, with which You will be compelled to maintain a military garrison there, that You will purchase the hostility of a very powerful nation and the dislike of all who go voyages. Finally, You will not find You have added for Yourself as much gain as You have lost in the way of public goodwill, which even when barren of results is considered a fine thing and is called the real treasure-hoard of princes. For that their chief wealth lies not so much in gold and silver talents as in the liking of the world and devotion of its people Your own Cyrus bears witness in Greek histories.

"Hearken, most puissant king, to the prayers of the whole of the Christian commonwealth, which by those same voices as it extols Your Highness's triumphs and valour begs earnestly and beseeches of You that, mindful of Persian greatheartedness and justice, You restore that fortress to the Spanish king and do not at this time close the most celebrated roadstead in the memory of man to navigation. Deprive Your foes of this solace, hopeful as they are (now) of being able to marshal against Your soldiers for the recovery of Hurmuz the armies of those peoples, who opened up to the human races the secrets of the unknown Ocean and have been able to span both hemispheres in their triumphant career.

"As for Us, it can hardly be said how urgently We wish the Portuguese, with their liking for the Persian race, never to be forced to the unhappiness of trying whether by force of arms and the shedding of blood they are strong enough to recover this port which their forebears fortified for the public convenience of countries and the sea. The magnanimity of Your Highness has the power here and now of binding very tightly the ties of all Europe and the Roman Pontiff to Your realm. Assuredly We shall all attend to it to make all Eastern nations understand that the foundations of those realms (of Yours) stand secure so long as You shall lay the whole Christian world under so great an obligation. And that We may bear witness more clearly on this matter, We have dispatched to You Our beloved son Francis Costa, a man dear to Us, experienced in Persian affairs and on that account, as We hope, acceptable to Your Highness. In him, therefore, when expounding in more detail Our views on this question You may have the same confidence as You would in Ourselves.

"Meanwhile We shall ask God, who wonderfully works peace in His high heaven, that as soon as possible these quarrels be decided by a renewal of harmony and not by the slaughtering of soldiers. For Your Highness, however, of whom the Christian nations expect this comfort, We can depute in Our stead as the debtor for so great a benefit the Lord of lords Himself, who being rich in tenderheartedness will with some brilliant price of happiness reward a decision of this kind. With such sighing as cannot be told the Roman Church will unceasingly beg of Him to guide the feet of Your Highness into the path of salvation, which will lead so great a king after the long-continued glory of this present life unto the kingdom of everlasting bliss.

"Given at S. Peter's, Rome, under the Fisherman's ring, the tenth day of June 1623, in the third year of Our Pontificate. . . ."

It is, however, true that in 1623¹ Sultan Murad IV of Turkey, having recommenced Turco-Persian hostilities dormant since the peace of 1618, lost Baghdad to the forces of Shah 'Abbas, and the latter may have been away from Isfahan for a considerable period in this and

¹ It was to remain in Persian control till 1638.

the following year. In this connection the 'Report' by Fr. John Thaddeus to Rome, dated 1624, mentions:¹

"The king of Persia had taken from the Turks the city of Baghdad together with the 'whole province of Mesopotamia² and, as an act of gratitude to his accursed Muhammad 'for such a victory, he gave the order to a favourite, who was an Armenian renegade,³ 'to have the Armenian Christians in those 43 hamlets in the province circumcised. At 'once with great severity and violence the officers of justice began the circumcision (of the inhabitants). 'Having no other sure help than our Fathers the poor men came weeping to 'Isfahan, to narrate what was happening. Although our Fathers were in great straits, 'none the less they borrowed 80 gold scudi from the Dutch heretics, so that by making a 'present of it to the favourite mentioned they might gain his goodwill and obtain an inter-'view with him, when they asked him, with all respect, how it was that the Shah was turning 'anew to inflict this outrage on those poor Christians. He answered that, without risking 'his own head, he was unable to desist from executing the royal order. . . . The Fathers 'suggested that he should observe the rescript, or *raqam*, which they held from the Shah 'for the 'Franks' (i.e. those who publicly professed obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff of 'Rome) to be allowed to live without compulsion.

"As the 'farman' had not lost its validity he agreed to this and in order to please the 'Fathers he at once sent an order that all those Armenians who were 'Franks' should go 'off to the village of Shahbulaq,⁴ which is situated in the middle of the 43 hamlets, and that 'none of his officers should go near it. He even permitted our Fathers to send Religious 'there in order to live among them and administer the Sacraments to them (which at 'the time could not be managed on account of shortage of Religious—instead, a secular 'priest was sent). Meanwhile the official dispatched a report of everything to the Shah 'who, seeing that the Fathers had offered opposition (to the execution of his decree) made 'his favourite 'Khan', i.e. governor, of those 44 hamlets, with instructions to allow everyone 'to live according to his own religion, while at the same time making them pay large sums 'of money in consideration of his restoring to them the ornaments, sacred books, and other 'sacred things which he had taken away from their churches. . . ."

"Now he has turned to persecuting the Armenians four leagues from the city," mentioned Fr. Prosper the Prior in a letter of 19.6.1624: and then, in another of 9.7.1624:

". . . He has stopped the persecution of the Armenians. The king is now here, and 'it is said that he is off to Basra, to Mecca, to Jerusalem. . . ."

However—to return to the intercourse between the Shah and the Carmelites—in the first year of his Pontificate, 9.3.1624, without referring to the claim of the king of Spain to Hurmuz, and in language more ornate but much less direct and pointed in matter than that of his predecessors Urban VIII (Maffeo Barberini) wrote to 'Abbas I a friendly Brief, in which he commended the Carmelites in Persia to the Shah's benevolence. The Latin text (see Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 38, p. 26, formerly 355) is given in the appendix—a translation of it runs:

"Pope Urban VIII to the illustrious and most puissant Shah Abbas, King of Persia.

"Illustrious and most puissant King, greeting and the light of the Divine grace. It is 'fit that the protection of the world and the guardianship of the human race be considered 'a Pontifical dignity. For the Roman See to which most powerful Kings submissively

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 209 *et seq.*

² But not Basra and its district, it is to be presumed.

³ This was perhaps Bagret, brother of Khusru, as noted in the MSS. *Hist. Miss.* It took place in May-June 1624.

⁴ If Shah Abul Haj be the correct reading, nothing is known in the modern Financial Department of the province regarding such a place. But Shahbulaq in the district of Piria, not far from Chahar-mahal, still continues an Armenian village—according to the Superior of the Lazarist (Vincentian) Fathers, letter of 25.2.1937.

“lower their rods of empire is the watch-tower of the whole earth wherein We have to keep ward for the safety of one and all the Kingdoms. Nor is any such nation to be found, fare as far as you will, whether mountain ranges or ocean waves sunder it from the regions in which We are, that is not embraced by the arms of the Apostolic love. Persia however We can nowise forget. Reverence is paid in the Christian world by heavenly honours to not a few Persians as citizens of heaven; and furthermore, just as once upon a time Greece the mistress of human wisdom sought a pattern of the perfect prince in the royal court of Persia and so proffered Cyrus’s virtue for imitation as the exemplar of good rule to every single age, so now Rome which is considered the infallible shrine of divine truth has enrolled not a few Persians likewise in the assemblage of the saints; and those who would copy their lives would arrive at the place of honour in everlasting bliss. But moreover the renown of Your Highness of which Europe has long expressed its approval attracts to itself the thoughts of those to whom the sight of a prince crowned with virtue is most welcome. Then again You not so long ago taught the peoples living in the part of the world native to Us how You are minded towards the Roman Pontiffs to whom You offered Your friendship by an embassy that showed Us great honour. But indeed truly a wonderful comfort is heaped on Us by the priests, Discalced Carmelite Religious, in making much of the happiness of the Persian Kingdom by proclaiming Your praises. Assuredly it is on no unmindful and thankless people that You have bestowed kindnesses. For, if it is a well-known pleasure with rulers to reach by their renown all those territories they cannot control by their sway, assuredly proofs of this joy are not lacking through them. Italy thinks that a unique proof of the divine mercy lies in that royal kindness which throws open in those Kingdoms hospitable dwellings for the Carmelite Community and also does not forbid Christian crosses and the Roman Rite openly to hold sway in their places of worship. Consequently We who have lately been raised to the throne of Apostolic majesty repeatedly turn Our mind’s eye to Your Highness desiring the King of kings, who is rich in mercy to reward this goodness of the royal nature with some outstanding piece of good fortune. We offer vows for Your safety and most fervently beg the Father of Lights to bring so fine a king through the paths of the Divine commandments to that glory where the co-heirs of Christ after flying forth from the prison of death rule in heaven and judge the nations and have dominion over the peoples. But it seemed fitting to intimate to Your Highness this desire of the Pontifical will by an Apostolic letter so that it might be clearly known to this nation of Yours that the kindnesses which come from the Persian court to the Christian commonalty do not in this Our Rome the mother of Catholic princes find the mind of the Church’s hierarchy lacking gratitude. Hence We recommend to Your Highness most earnestly the peoples that serve Christ, whom Our priests, zealous for the common peace and quiet, will constantly incite to render to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s. But indeed through whatever favours of royal kindness You protect the Carmelite Community rich as it is in heavenly virtues and beloved of the Christian commonwealth, through those same You increase the splendours of Your Name in the Roman city and the comforts of Our Pontifical love. Our goodwill however which You have long since earned by such noted favour can be entirely pledged to You by those practices whereby the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the chief places in eternity are gained. Let Your Highness entirely believe that this will be the continual prayer of Our Pontifical love, on whom when triumphing amid the plaudits of worldly bliss We desire the Sun of divine truth to shine forth. “Given at Rome at S. Peter’s under the Fisherman’s ring 9th March 1624 in the first year of Our Pontificate.”

At the same time this great missionary Pope, aware of the strain of the situation for his Carmelite sons and delegates, wrote to encourage them a Brief (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 38, p. 28, formerly 357, in Arch. Sec. Vat.), in which, moreover, was granted as a reward, a plenary indulgence for the feasts of SS. Simon, Jude, Thomas:



POPE URBAN VIII (MAFFEO BARBERINI)
By Pietro da Cortona, in the Capitoline Gallery, Rome
[Ahnari photo]



"Pope Urban VIII to his beloved sons the Discalced Carmelite Religious staying in Persia.

"Beloved sons, greeting, etc. Though everywhere man's life on earth is a warfare, our
"everlasting Emperor seems to have highly valued your virtue which He has preferred to
"keep in a war-camp rather than in sensual pleasures. You serve Christ as His soldiers
"in those tracts wherein the banners of the Muhammadan superstition hold sway; nor is
"any access to anyone's goodwill open to you which you have not first to carry by the
"assault of piety and by the help of Heaven. Ah! happy you who have been chosen for
"the most distant provinces by the Sun of Righteousness Himself to shine on the East which
"dwells in the shadow of death, for the purpose that you wonderful men may carry the
"Lord's name before the Gentiles in the sight of the powerful. But be it noted: while
"treading in the Apostles' footsteps you must never lay down the arms of light amid the
"sons of darkness. However, that these helps, the arts of godliness, exist We do know,
"whereby the Lord's service can be honoured in you, and the practices of prayer whereby
"the helps of the heavenly host are easily summoned. Now as We have word that you do
"carefully attend to this point, it can hardly be told how great a comfort to Our Pontifical
"disquietude you are through whose exertions the Christian commonwealth owes to a
"foreign King favour bestowed. Extenders of the Christian empire and protectors of the
"heavenly Kingdom will be your name if God's grace be not vain in you. Accordingly,
"as We long for so great a guerdon for you, We promise you Pontifical protection and We
"impart the Apostolic benediction. Forth! beloved sons, and carry with you the spirit of
"mighty armies; bring unbelieving peoples under the banner of Christ's Cross; walk upon
"asps and basilisks, thinking naught so much to be desired in this life as the triumph of
"that precious death which enrolls the martyrs incarnadined by their own blood within
"the assemblages of them that reign in eternal bliss. So, that you may do this more eagerly,
"We grant and confirm for you by Our authority all the privileges and indulgences that
"the Pontifical affection has hitherto granted to those who are sent by the Apostolic See
"to convert the infidels. Moreover, We urge you to adopt for yourselves in so irksome a
"life abroad the most holy Apostles Simon, Jude and Thomas as patrons, that they may
"teach you how to hurl spiritual thunderbolts by means of those fiery tongues which
"descended from heaven and which were the Holy Ghost's javelins and two-edged swords
"for utterly taming the world and breaking despots' proud mien. But, that Our Pontifical
"love be demonstrated to you not only by encouragement but also by boons, We unlock
"the treasures of the Church with devout generosity. Accordingly, We grant a plenary
"indulgence to all and each who duly approach churches built in these parts or to be
"built, on those days on which the Roman Church solemnly keeps those three Apostles'
"birthdays. We embrace you with the arms of Apostolic love, dear sons, and beg the
"Father's compassion that by the happiness of your devotion He keep safe the barbarian
"tribes and comfort the Christian commonwealth.

"Given at Rome at S. Peter's, etc., 9th March 1624 in the first year of Our Pontificate."

The position was difficult and delicate in most directions by this time; but it was the financial stringency which most hampered the Carmelites and made them depute the Prior to proceed to Rome and obtain funds: he set off, 12.9.1624, reaching Aleppo, 13.12.1624, "without a farthing".¹ It was presumably unusual in simple missionaries, but yet an affirmation of the special status as the Pope's representatives, recognized for them in the past, that the Fathers should address Pope Urban VIII direct in this connection:

"Holy Father, After most humbly kissing your feet . . . on account of the things, which
"happened in this Mission of Persia in the years last past, and because of other needs and
"business supervening at this juncture, it has been seen fit to dispatch Fr. Prosper of the

¹ Fr. Prosper, 27.2.1625, O.C.D. 23 d.

"Holy Spirit, Prior of this convent of Isfahan, to the City (Rome), and in the names of
 "all of us he will lay them at your sacred feet and beg the blessing of Your Holiness, and
 "so that Your Holiness may be informed by him of past happenings in this mission so
 "specially initiated and promoted at the bidding and by the decision of the Apostolic See.
 "Meanwhile, praying God to be pleased to preserve Your Holiness for many years as the
 "head of our Church,

"Isfahan in Persia—24th of August 1624, the humblest and least of your servants,
 "Discalced Carmelites of the Convent of Isfahan,

"Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Elisaeus

"Fr. Balthazar of S. Mary

"Fr. Dominic of S. Mary

"Brother Diego of the Cross."¹

That within a year of what might well have been considered a crushing blow—(a) blood-thirsty repression by Muslim authorities of a considerable proportion of the relatively few converts made, (b) the internment of the Religious within their premises at Isfahan for some eight months, (c) the loss of their Residence at Hurmuz and its special sphere of usefulness, (d) the loss of that Portuguese stronghold on the south Persian coast and all the influence the presence of the Portuguese there in traffic, national connections and monetary assistance had meant for the Carmelites, (e) the loss of intimate relations with the Shah, and his patronage—the widest development of any single year in the history of the Mission should be witnessed was surely no mere coincidence: and this, though the mother-convent at Isfahan was in such great straits, in debt, living on loans and advances. It may be considered significant, too, that Fr. Paul Simon of Jesus Mary, senior of the three Fathers founders of the Mission, who took a warm, personal interest in its progress and success, was 6.5.1623, elected Praepositus General of the Order, seventh in succession; for attention to needs in numbers, scope, activities and funds oscillated at most periods of its history according to the relative importance assigned to foreign missions by the Definitory General of the time being.

On 26.3.1623 Fr. Basil of S. Francis, a Portuguese from Santarem by race, was dispatched from Isfahan (where at the time there were seven Fathers priests and two Lay Brothers in residence) to Basra, to see whether it would be possible to found a Residence in that port and, if this proved not feasible, at least to obtain a sufficient sum in alms from the Portuguese ships sometimes visiting it as would relieve temporarily the great financial needs of the convent at Isfahan. It was foreseen that there would be considerable numbers of Christian sailormen and travellers frequenting the port, to whom a resident Carmelite might minister, a Portuguese in particular. At that period Basra and its district were ruled by a local Arab dynasty, independent² of any control from Baghdad or the rest of Mesopotamia, whoever—Turk or Persian—might be by force of arms possessed of Babylon, but owning in a vague degree the Sultan at Constantinople as suzerain. It was in this year, indeed, that Shah 'Abbas became master of Baghdad; but Basra was not affected, save for apprehension by the local Arab 'Pasha' or Shaikh that greed and ambition would lead the Persian king or his viceroy in the south to extend their operations to Basra—an apprehension which made the Arab governor doubly anxious to attract Portuguese to the Shatt-ul-Arab, for increased customs duties and increased prosperity of the port, and to gain the armed alliance and protection of the war-vessels from Goa and Masqat.³

It would have been difficult to have found a more suitable and adequate pioneer for the

¹ *Vide* in Vat. Libr., Fondo Barberini, 7817, Lat.

² *Vide* Fr. Basil, 20 6.1623, O.C.D. 241 g. "The Pasha is, as it were, absolute lord of this town and of many other places under it."

³ *Vide* Fr. Basil, in the same letter: ". . . because of the great need he (the Pasha) had of the king of Portugal . . .": also letter of 8 4.1625, O.C.D. 241 a: ". . . five Portuguese warships which the Pasha greatly desired to see because of the fear of the king of Persia in which he stood." See also Fr. Eugenius, 16 1.1625, O.C.D. 242 i: ". . . This land is in peace at present, though some time ago there was fear that the Persians might take it, as they had come one day's journey away to capture a fort and, if there had not been 20 Portuguese ships in local pay, which went to the rescue, it might have been taken, it is said."

task than Fr. Basil, a typical example of the evangelist arriving from afar, with no coins and all his possessions on his back, and yet building up single-handed a flourishing mission post—his letters display some of his talents, and the romance of the mission at Basra can be read in detail in the other part of the present work: he was a Portuguese and therefore *persona gratissima* with his fellow-countrymen, seafaring folk who opened their pockets liberally to him. When in the following year, 1624, Augustinian Hermits arrived from Goa and disputed his right to exercise the office of parish priest on the ground that they held the commission of the Archbishop, Primate of the Indies, in whose jurisdiction they claimed Basra to be, it was obviously due in the main to the fact that Fr. Basil was himself a compatriot that little by little they acquiesced in his priority of arrival and his established reputation with the Arabs and trading visitors, and that before long they abandoned that field.¹ Of his energy in building gradually all the premises requisite for a Residence which would house four or five Religious and passing guests and travellers in addition, as well as a chapel, the narrative in his own words, translated in the other portion of this work, furnishes a full description, which need not here be repeated, and to which the reader is referred. Suffice it to emphasize that the Carmelite chapel acquired and opened in March 1624–April 1625 was the first Christian place of worship to be made in Basra, since the Muhammadan conquest at any rate, the site the first Christian settlement. Formerly there had been only mosques, and three synagogues of Jews: there were but half-a-dozen families of Nestorians, Armenians, Jacobite Syrians resident in 1620.² All the flourishing Christian population of the present day is of later growth. The Carmelite church at Basra merits, therefore, the reverence of all and doubly that of the Order, for it represents today its oldest Mission, which—except for gaps owing to wars, pestilence and expulsion—has functioned and seen Mass offered in a continuous history since 1624, the sole survivor of the extensive missionary province of Persia and the Indies and more than a century senior to the existing central mission in Baghdad.

The new Pope, Urban VIII, was particularly interested in missionary enterprise and it is on record that, acting on an offer made by Fr. Paul Simon, freshly elected Praepositus General of the Order,³ to supply “five Fathers to propagate the Faith in Basra of Babylonia, and in “Babylon itself and in Arabia”, he decreed—*teste* a meeting of the Sacr. Congregation of Propaganda on 16.1.1624—“a mission of Carmelite Fathers to the said places, and ordered “formal letters patent to be issued”.⁴ The Pope too issued a Brief addressed to his “Beloved “sons the Discalced Carmelites setting out for Arabia” on 27.4.1624 (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 38, p. 104, No. 501), the text of which is given in the Appendix of Latin Briefs. It would almost seem as if there had been an aim in Rome by both the Sacr. Congregation⁵ and the Order to establish a separate Carmelite mission for Arabia, centred on Basra—an intention which was anticipated through the dispatch by the Convent at Isfahan of Fr. Basil of S. Francis, and shelved subsequently by acquiescence of Rome in the Residence at Basra being regarded as a dependency of that Convent, a solution which in itself may have appeared natural with the Persian occupation of and suzerainty over Baghdad from 1623 onwards to 1638.

It was that Persian occupation, no doubt, which moved Fr. Prosper to write from Isfahan in his letter of 19.6.1624 that ‘if only he had the friars to send, he would have founded a house ‘in Baghdad’, and Fr. Basil on 9.5.1624 to discuss such a project, when writing to his blood-brother, Fr. Luke, in Rome. Further in connection with the proposal for such an extension of Carmelite activities to Baghdad there is included in the “Instructions” to Fr. Eugenius of S. Benedict, the next Visitor General, in 1624 from the Definitory General one that ‘he should ‘send from Isfahan four Religious, or at least three, to the mission at Basra, *recommended to us*

¹ Vide Fr. Basil, 11.4.1625, O.C.D. 241 g.

² In 1650 only three Armenian households, vide Fr. Matthew of SS. Joseph, 28.4.1651, O.C.D. 241 n.

³ Vide O.C.D. 241 a.

⁴ A photographic reproduction is given of this early ‘commission’ by the recently formed Congregation of Propaganda, one of the earliest extant perhaps, on the opposite page: it has the signatures of the first Prefect, Cardinal Ludovisi, and of the first secretary, Mgr Ingoli.

⁵ Vide O.C.D. 284 g. “Instructions from Mgr Ingoli for the Discalced Carmelite Fathers, who will go on mission to “Basra in Babylonia.”

'by His Holiness, who will reside there and be able to make excursions to the neighbouring Christians. . . .'

Within four months of the founding at Basra, and still without any funds, under the leadership of the energetic Prior the Carmelites in Persia had seized an opportunity and taken on themselves a further responsibility and purchased a house in Shiraz, the capital of the province of Fars. The Prior himself put it in one of his letters that:

" . . . the Khan of Shiraz, who had had the four Christians killed, has now been moved "to ask the king for permission for us to make an establishment in his province . . .";¹

but the circumstances are best narrated in sequence by Fr. Dominic of S. Mary:²

" . . . Our Religious," he wrote, "had . . . for years previously judged it requisite to "have a house in Shiraz, both because of the conversions to be expected there, as also of "the perfection in the knowledge of the language and religious laws (of Persia) to be "attained there. . . . On many occasions in previous years the Khan of Shiraz had "signified clearly to our Fathers that he would be greatly pleased if, just as the Fathers "were at Isfahan, they should also be (settled) at Shiraz: and in confirmation or demon- "stration of this on many occasions he showed favours and courtesies to those Fathers who "had to pass through Shiraz and deal with him. . . . In March 1619 our Fathers at "Isfahan by common accord and instrument approved of such a mission in Shiraz being "to the good, and that it would usefully be undertaken: that document having been sent "to Rome, they say that our Superiors thought well of it and agreed to charge with it "Fr. Vincent of S. Francis, sent as Visitor to these parts. In the instructions given him "he was to arrange for such a foundation (at Shiraz), just as also they gave him a commission "for a mission in the province of Luristan,³ and for that said mission in Luristan the said "Fr. Vincent in 1621 gave orders and permission that it should be taken in hand, provided "there were the approval and consent of the three senior Fathers at the convent" (then Frs. John Thaddeus, Prosper and Dimas) "by whom on 4th November it was proposed "as a necessary (preliminary) for such a mission in Luristan that there should be a hospice "in Shiraz.⁴ The Lurs themselves deemed it necessary and suitable. . . . For that reason, "after secret voting by all three votes it was voted well to make a start with the said hospice "at Shiraz. In accordance with those desires and instructions in the name of all Fr. John

¹ Fr. Prosper, 4 7.1623, O.C.D. 238 d

² 27.9.1626, O.C.D. 238 o.

³ In the 'Instructions' on record in O.C.D. 284 g., signed by the Praepositus General Fr. Matthias of S. Francis, 30.6 1620, no such specific mention of Shiraz and Luristan has been noticed. But it does include the words: "Your Reverence will "bring us a full report . . . on the fresh missions which offer . . .": and clause 2 authorized the Visitor to dispatch to "missions other than those, which our Fathers already have . . ." and "to accept hospices or Residences with or without "an oratory".

⁴ To twentieth-century eyes and minds, considering the modern province of Luristan as a hundred or two miles away to the NW., across interminable ranges of wild mountains and valleys, the nearest Lur tribes at least 80-100 miles, it reads strangely that 'Lurs' should have regarded the establishment of a branch mission at Shiraz as a necessary centre-point for evangelizing work by the Carmelites among them.

Yet that there must have been ground for the statement in Fr. Dominic's narrative can be seen by comparing the following remarks by Fr. John Thaddeus himself in his lengthy 'Report' to Rome, drawn up in 1624 (S.R., vol. 209), on the motives for planting a mission station at Shiraz in relation to the Lurs:

"First, it was out of fear of the Shah, secondly, because we had no house where we can catechize them; thirdly, hitherto "on account of insufficient numbers of missionaries and by orders of our Superiors we had not sought conversions, "because they" (the missionaries) "would not be able to catechize afterwards those whom they had baptized: so they "have refused to baptize those who came to the convent, carrying on with them as best may be" (For this reason, he adds, more missionaries and funds are needed.) . . . "Nevertheless quite a number of the Lurs became Christians and "especially after the death of the first four Persian martyrs (who) were of the ancient race of Persia, who bear undying "hatred for the king because he subjugated them and have retired to a more impregnable part of Persia, such as are the "provinces of Luristan and Kurdistan. And the Fathers are in relations with the people of Luristan, from whom came the "five men baptized, of whom four became martyrs. These people begged the Fathers to build a church among them, "but so that the Shah might not suspect their relations. The Fathers told them they would found a Residence in their "[?sic] chief town, Shiraz—although expelled from it the Lurs have always regarded this as their country—and they "told the Fathers that, even if the Shah had subjugated them and killed 30,000 of them, another 30,000 might well die "for the true Faith. So the Fathers founded a hospice in Shiraz. With this race some results can be obtained, but only "in time. . . ." (Note that Fr. John Thaddeus did not consider one of the five to be a martyr—perhaps Alexander?)

him the Daruga had various houses in the town, belonging to Imam Quli Khan shown to the Carmelites: not finding among these any suitable, Fr. John Thaddeus sought and discovered one privately owned for sale:¹ and on 5.8.1623 the Carmelites entered into occupation of it, Fr. John Thaddeus on the 6th August saying the first Mass in the largest room. Though the rooms needed alteration for the purpose, the premises, with a very large garden containing many pomegranate trees (but a scarcity of water), were considered suitable and convenient, being outside the town *on the road to Lar and Hurmuz*. They belonged to minors, and the valuation on their behalf, 60 Tumans, i.e. 600 gold ducats, was subsequently deemed excessive by the next Visitor General and others, and in fact proved a heavy burden for the Persian Mission for years ahead, a source of litigation as late as 1634. The new missionary at Basra, Fr. Basil, and the Vicar Provincial from Goa rendered sterling aid in collecting and borrowing money to pay off the purchase price, though the latter in his distant port had not been consulted regarding the opening of this mission and prior to the purchase.² No precise details have been traced in the correspondence preserved in the archives which would enable the site of this Residence to be fixed, even approximately: it is doubtful whether the present town of Shiraz, destroyed by an earthquake at the close of the 18th century and altered by Karim Khan Zand, has the same boundaries on the road to Lar it then had: and no monuments or tombs *in situ* are known. In any case that site was sold and changed for another in 1656.

Here, as well as at Basra and at Tatta in Sind, the Hermits of S. Augustine were moved by emulation to establish themselves simultaneously. Two of them had asked for a house and they owed it to the pleading of Fr. John Thaddeus that they were authorized at Ab-i-Kurang by Imam Quli Khan to proceed to Shiraz at the same time as the Carmelites and to reside there. But difficulties were made to their finding suitable quarters, and within five years they had abandoned the enterprise, as they did at Basra later.³

The Shirazis are of an enquiring, receptive cast of mind for any doctrine or philosophy, and in the early years of their establishment those Fathers, who were at that Residence, were hopeful of results.

"... Up to three months or so back," wrote Fr. Dominic of S. Mary in June 1625,⁴ "there were crowds coming to our house (and to that of the Augustinian Fathers, where 'there is a Religious of theirs), people coming for *tamasha*, as they call it, i.e. sightseeing. 'But two or three months ago the 'locum tenens' of the Daruga, or governor, asked Frs. 'John and Dimas to be so good as not to allow women of the country to enter our church: 'and a few days later they proclaimed by public crier that no one was to go to our house, 'for which reason the attendance has greatly diminished: only some of the notables coming 'sometimes. . . . Eight persons have been baptized, two or three of them Muslim people, 'the others children of Christians. . . . Still, were the traffic to and from Hurmuz and 'that road reopened, the new mission-post should give little trouble in the matter of its 'maintenance," opined Fr. Dominic.

The compiler of the MSS. *Hist. Miss.* avers,⁵ without citing the name of the writer:

"The common people . . . began to visit the church. . . . They stopped to gaze at the 'façade, which had been painted with fresco representations of the Last Day, Death, 'Judgment and Hell.⁶ It became a common term to say that they were going to the 'church for *ziarat*⁷ and homage to Jesus and Mary. . . . Some from afar used to make 'obseance towards the church, others took candles, oil and money to offer for use in it. . . ."⁸

¹ The Prior, Fr. Prosper, in his letter, 23.9.1623, stated: "I had given instructions that, if they had a chance of buying, 'they should not lose it. . . ."

² *Vide* Fr. Basil, 22.7.1625, O.C.D. 241 g.

³ *Vide* Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, letter of 27.9.1626, cited: Fr. Dimas, 24.10.1631, O.C.D. 237 b.

⁴ 18.6.1625, O.C.D. 238 o.

⁵ Chap. 23, book 4, part 2.

⁶ Such scenes still exist in the cathedral in Julfa.

⁷ The word used in Persia for pilgrimages to Shah shrines, not to Mecca.

⁸ There are Armenian churches in Chaharmahal where still (or till 1915 at any rate) Muslim women would bring votive offerings when they had recourse to the Virgin Mary.

On the other hand, from the beginning the provision of Religious for the new Residence proved far from easy: within twenty days of its occupation Fr. Peter Thomas died of one of those fevers, which are so frequent in late summer and autumn, while the veteran Fr. John Thaddeus returned to Isfahan: "I went, I saw, and I founded."¹ In his place from 1623 to 1625, came Fr. Dimas: and it was during his 'presidency' of that mission that Imam Quli Khan requested that there should be procured from Rome texts of Plato and Aristotle in Greek and in Latin, as well as Arabic-Latin dictionaries and the Bible in Arabic² for the use of the 'University' at Shiraz, the big Madrasah.³

Although their letters speak of him with gratitude, as helping the Mission at Shiraz with his protection as well as financially and supplying them with all their requirements in provisions as long as he lived,⁴ there are other indications, besides that of his action with regard to the five converts, that Imam Quli Khan was severe and even fanatical in regard to the religion of Islam (as is sometimes found among renegades): he was, however, frequently away for extensive periods from Shiraz, and then his chief subordinates, the deputies left as Daruga and officials, at intervals made themselves unpleasant towards the Carmelites—not all of them, for some were sympathetic and friendly. Thus in 1627 a Portuguese, named Blaise Carvalho who, having left Basra for Masqat, had been wrecked on the Persian coast, was arrested and, brought to Shiraz, offered his life on condition that he would apostatize. He refused and on the orders of Imam Quli Khan was beheaded. Although unable to obtain his pardon (Imam Quli Khan being a sworn enemy of the Portuguese) Fr. Dominic of S. Mary was allowed to visit Carvalho frequently, to hear his general confession and comfort him: and after the execution Fr. Dominic obtained the body and buried it in the church, preserving the bloodstained clothing of the 'martyr',⁵ as he deemed Blaise Carvalho to have been and as Fr. Philip of the Most Holy Trinity, afterwards General of the Order, in his book *Voyages d'Orient*⁶ hailed this staunch Portuguese Catholic Christian. Curiously enough, no attempt appears to have been made by the Carmelites to pursue the main objective, with which as above stated the Residence at Shiraz had been instituted, viz. work among the Lurs.

In 1624, moreover, the Definitory General in Rome had, under the signature of the Praepositus General, Fr. Paul Simon, and of its secretary, Fr. Matthias, later himself Praepositus General, in instructions⁷ to the new Visitor General, Fr. Eugenius, agreed to accept and recognize the convent at Goa which, after much opposition from the Portuguese civil authorities, had been started there in 1620 by Fr. Leander of the Annunciation, but provided that the Visitor and Vicar Provincial and two senior Fathers of the convent at Isfahan formally voted for it: and it would seem, though nothing specific is recorded, that this provision was forthcoming.

Once more—by his Brief of 16.7.1620 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 14, p. 144) to the Archbishop of Goa—Pope Paul V had done his best to smooth the way for the establishment of the Carmelites in Goa. He had on the same day bidden the Governor of Hurmuz receive the Carmelite Visitor General helpfully: while by a Brief of 9.3.1624 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 38, p. 29, No. 414) the new Pope Urban VIII like his predecessor had urged the Archbishop to give his patronage to the Discalced Carmelites

"very pleasing to Ourselves and to the Church. . . . Know therefore that it would be
"most gratifying to Us if you arrange that this Congregation of the Carmelites reside in
"several convents of those parts. . . ."

By 1628, moreover, a fresh Residence had been instituted at Diu, a small island on the south coast of Kathiawar: and thus the Carmelites had by then six establishments—Isfahan, Basra, Shiraz, Tatta in Sind, Goa and Diu—to finance and to staff: a sudden increase in a

¹ See his letter, 29.9.1623, O.C.D. 237 m.

² It would be interesting to enquire whether such texts exist in the libraries of the Madrasah.

³ Vide Fr. Prosper, 23.9.1623, O.C.D. 238 d.

⁴ Vide Fr. John Thaddeus' 'Report' on the Mission to Persia, 1624. S.R., vol. 209: "The Khan (or Duke) of that town
"not only permitted them to buy a large house, but gave them a donation of 400 zecchini and the bell which he had taken
"from the town of Hurmuz."

⁵ See S.R., vol. 209, letter of 2.10.1627.

⁶ Printed at Lyons, 1669.

⁷ 4.2.1624, O.C.D. 284 g.

matter of six years from the two at Isfahan and Tatta and, as it proved, beyond their capacity to maintain effectively, for that would have required at a minimum some fifteen Religious in sacerdotal orders, all fluent in the local languages and active in preaching and proselytism.

If the intention of the Religious in Isfahan to found another mission somewhere in 'Luristan' be borne in mind and also the desire of the Praepositus General, Fr. Paul Simon, given in his 'Instructions' to the Visitor, Fr. Eugenius: "I desire that some Religious be sent to the Georgians in order to see what results can be gained", and further the allusions in Fr. Basil's letters from Basra to the wish of the Definitory General to open at Baghdad already in 1624-5, it will be perceived that the vision of the Carmelites, from Praepositus General to Religious on the spot in the East, was grandiose—a chain of missions from Portuguese India to Baghdad, from Sind to Georgia. The sequel was to show that frequent changes in the government of the Order in Rome, the personality of those concerned there, as well as differences of calibre and qualifications and ideals in succeeding drafts of the missionaries themselves, besides other factors local and financial, were to tell against a continuance of the policy and fulfilment of the plan in view during the reign of 'Abbas I.

Henceforth it meant that there were one Convent and two Residences in Portuguese India, one Convent and two Residences in Persia and Basra, and proficiency requisite in at least four languages in addition to those of the missionaries—Persian, Armenian, Arabic, Goanese-Portuguese—if the Religious could profitably be transferred from one country to another: it also entailed that the Vicar Provincial, who was placed in charge of all, would spend much of his period of office in travelling—the 'Instructions' to Fr. Eugenius of S. Benedict from the Definitory General stipulated that, when not away on visitations, the Vicar Provincial should reside in Persia.

Another noteworthy direction from Rome in these 'Instructions' had been a formal order that a daily diary of everything that occurred should be kept and sent to the Praepositus General in Rome every six months: letters, too, were to be in duplicate, sent by different opportunities. These proved to be counsels of perfection: of Basra and its affairs a journal extending over more than 100 years has survived, but, with its gaps, how far from being even an annual record! For Isfahan there are allusions by certain Religious to historical data and annals being on record: had these not disappeared, there would have been far less reason for this present book. Copies were not posted to Rome in any case.

Clearly an effort was made in the years of Fr. Paul Simon's tenure of the supreme office in the Order to provide more adequate numbers of Religious: in addition to four accompanying the Visitor General in 1624, four Carmelites (it is mentioned by Fr. Basil, 17.2.1624) had passed Basra on their way to Goa in 1623; but three of the latter died in India in less than one year from then.¹ Notwithstanding, through the Visitor General, himself a future Praepositus General, the convent at Isfahan was warned that they must not look for funds from headquarters in Italy, the more so as the Cacurri endowment and legacy, on which the mission had originally been undertaken in 1604, was the subject of litigation: at the same time the purpose expressed in these 'Instructions' by Fr. Paul Simon and the Definitors General was that the Order did not aim at any extension of the missions in India, and agreed to the opening at Goa and Tatta solely as a means for collecting funds from generous Portuguese sources to support the needy convent at Isfahan and its daughter houses in Persia and Basra.

* * * *

* * *

* *

¹ These were: (a) Fr. Valerian of S. Andrew, a German (the 'Brief Narrative' of Fr. Stephen, O.C.D. 236 a., calls him 'Schiavone'); family name Andreas Becker [*? sic*], born at Hamm in Westphalia, 1592. From childhood living with his parents at Naples, he there sought entry to the Order and received the habit at S. Maria di Scala, Rome, 17.4.1611: professed 23.4.1612. Sent to Goa towards end of 1623 via Basra. Notice of death was 16.5.1624 (*vide* 'Series Professionum', No. 90, by Fr. Marcellinus a S. Theresia); (b) certainly Fr. Leonard of the Holy Spirit (for whom see biographical section) was another. In the list of the 'Brief Narrative' together with the names of Frs. Valerian and Leonard occur those of Frs. "Antony the Florentine" and "Charles from Genoa": they may have been the other two who died. There was a Fr. Antoninus of St. Alexis, who died at Goa in 1624, *vide* Ser. Prof. S. Silvestri, but he was a Spaniard.

It has been shown how, while Imam Quli Khan was at Ab-i-Kurang, Shah 'Abbas I was at Farrahabad, a favourite palace near the Caspian, in July 1623. Later that year, either at the time of the fall of Baghdad or shortly afterwards, he may have been in the newly won city or in western Persia—no definite allusion has been observed in the letters of the missionaries. The western route was disturbed about that time, for: "the roads are too difficult for correspondence to arrive safely", the Prior had written, 8.1.1624: and from April till the end of November 1624 the Visitor General, Fr. Eugenius, and his party had had to wait in Aleppo 'on account of the wars', before proceeding to Basra and Baghdad respectively).¹ During the renewed persecution of the Armenians of May-June 1624 the Shah was certainly away from Isfahan;² but it is clear that by July of that year he was back in his capital:

"The king is now here: and it is said that he is going to Basra."³

stated Fr. Prosper, 9.7.1624. The capture of Baghdad had, as already noted in Fr. Basil's letters, made the Arab Shaikh and governor of Basra apprehend an early extension of Persian operations in the direction of the Shatt-ul-'Arab: and by the end of 1624 it had materialized; for from Basra the Visitor General wrote, 16.1.1625:⁴

"This country is at peace at present, though a short time before . . . the Persians . . . had come (as near as) one day's journey off, to capture a fort, and if there had not been twenty Portuguese ships . . . which went to the rescue . . . it might have been taken. There is a report that Hurmuz is surrounded by the Portuguese, who prevent any supplies whatever from reaching it. . . ."

Sometime early in 1625 (or possibly late in 1624) serious trouble had broken out in Georgia, so that in May and June of 1625 Shah 'Abbas was still detained in the Caucasus:

"The king is absent from the city occupied with the affairs of Georgia".

mentioned Fr. John Thaddeus on 27.5.1625,⁵ and on 18.6.1625 from Shiraz Fr. Dominic of S. Mary wrote:⁶

". . . The king is altogether occupied in Georgia, because of an unexpected and great rising. Some days ago he sent a khala't, or robe of honour, for the eldest son of the Khan of Shiraz, who would be about 13 years old, so that he may" (be invested and) "govern" (the province): "and a whiplash for his father, as a sign that he should ride for Georgia; whither he is on his way with his men at great speed. . . ."

In 1626, on the vigil of the Annunciation, i.e. 24th March, an incident, which appeared to portend tragedy and turned to comedy, happened at the convent in Isfahan "while Shah 'Abbas was absent from Isfahan at the head of his army near Babylon."⁷

His 'Wazir'—perhaps the Daruga is meant—new to office, suddenly sent 200 soldiers to surround the convent of the Carmelites, which they searched thoroughly. The Fathers, asked to state their number, replied that there were in residence: Father Dimas of the Cross, Elisaeus of S. Andrew, Balthazar of S. Mary and two Lay Brothers. An order was given for them all to be bound. Then the soldiers set on them, beat them with sticks and tied their hands behind their backs. They were led away and, thinking they were going to martyrdom, they sang the 'Te Deum' and hymns along the streets, refusing to be silent. A soldier made as if to strike on the mouth one of the Fathers, who promptly offered his cheek voluntarily, whereat

¹ O.C.D. 236 b. Fr. Elisaeus of S. Andrew, who incidentally mentions that he gave tobacco to Arabs when crossing the desert—perhaps an early instance of smoking in Arabia.

² See MSS. *Hist. Miss.*

³ O.C.D., 238 d.

⁴ *Idem*, 241 i.

⁵ *Idem*, 237 m.

⁶ *Idem*, 238 o.

⁷ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 12, book 5, part 3, alone relates this story.

the astonished soldier dropped his hand. As they passed, the populace variously expressed compassion out of regard for kindnesses received, or hostility on account of dislike of proselytism. The Wazir, before whom they were taken, was sitting with his officials and greeted them politely and asked them to sit down: he was taken aback on learning of the treatment meted out to them by the officer who had made the arrests, and threatened him so that the man feared for his life and Fr. Dimas interceded for him. The Wazir and his assessors began to ask questions about the Christian Faith and, at Fr. Balthazar's replies, realized that those before him were the 'missionaries of the Pope',¹ and that he or the officers had made a mistake in the quarry; for it appeared that the Shah had sent him instructions to remove the "Portuguese Fathers" (i.e. the Augustinians) to Shiraz, on account of Portuguese activity in Basra against Persian interests and forces—doubtless in connection with the raid against Basra mentioned just above and similar movements.² Hastily, therefore, the Wazir sent off messengers to bring the Augustinian Fathers to his tribunal, but courteously. The Carmelites were allowed to go free and returned to receive the congratulations of many of the inhabitants, albeit they regretted that they had missed the expected guerdon of martyrdom: they won further respect by declining to make complaint to the Shah about their treatment. The Portuguese Augustinians had, however, to depart from Isfahan and gave the keys of their house in charge of the Carmelites. From an independent source³ it is learnt that this expulsion of the Augustinian Hermits from Isfahan lasted well into 1627:

"... The Augustinians have been allowed to return to Isfahan, declared innocent of 'the troubles' . . ."⁴

But there would seem to have been internal unrest as well as a certain atmosphere of uneasiness and suspicion abroad, a habit to which the Persian official mind has been prone at all times past and present; for, on the occasion of the Vicar Provincial, Fr. Leander, accompanying from Goa, Portuguese territory, the Visitor General, Fr. Eugenius, to a 'Congress' of the Carmelites in 1626—they arrived at Shiraz, 15.1626; Frs. Dominic and John Thaddeus were also there—the last-named wrote:⁵

"The governor of this town and province of Persia did not allow them (the Vicar Provincial and Visitor General) to pass until he had communicated with the Shah and the 'duke' (i.e. Imam Quli Khan who must have been away in the north). They gave notice, and permission arrived, and they had been already seen off (passed out) by the officials and were on horseback, about to issue from the gate of the town, when the governor by a servant sent to tell us that, although it was true he had given us permission . . . still, for all that, it was necessary that permission should also be sought of the 'Sultan', son of Imam Quli Khan.

"On the following day, in public audience, they gave us the order that I should remain 'for some days at Shiraz. So Fr. Eugenius of S. Benedict is departing' (i.e. from Persia), 'and because of the disorders and turbulences of the perilous juncture he has not dared to take with him some letters which I had ready to send to your Reverence. . . .'"

From 1622 onwards the sojourns of Shah 'Abbas I in Isfahan, his capital, appear to have been brief: when not on campaign he passed much of his time in the palace he had made at Farrahabad near by the Caspian Sea: and for that reason, if no other, interviews with the Carmelites must have become rare, apart from the loss in intimacy, and the coolness in the Shah's attitude which had supervened. That he retained some regard for Fr. John Thaddeus

¹ See farther on, in comment on this phrase.

² This incident would appear better dated in 1625, with the Portuguese threat to Hurmuz and action at Basra; but other evidence fixes it as in 1626.

³ A letter from Venice, in *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 21, dated 2.10.1627.

⁴ "Troubles", perhaps they were suspected of having instigated the Portuguese fleet to oppose Persian designs on Basra.

⁵ O.C.D. 237 m., letter of 5.7 1626.

ms indicated by a reference in a letter¹ of 1626 (alluding to the written request made in 23 by this Religious for permission to acquire a Residence at Shiraz):

"The king did not then reply on this point and, it is said, did not give his decision, as 'he was waiting for the Father to go and see him . . .'" (i.e. at Farrahabad),

and about July–August 1626 also the Vicar Provincial, Fr. Leander, must have had an interview with the Shah at Farrahabad, and been followed in 1627 by Fr. John Thaddeus himself, the evidence of a letter² of Fr. Dimas, 30.5.1627:

"We are expecting Fr. John Thaddeus from Shiraz. . . . Fr. John Thaddeus is returning 'to Isfahan in order to go and see the king about a matter likely to cause annoyance to 'his Majesty, who will probably give Fr. John Thaddeus the same reply and mortification 'as the king did to Fr. Leander, then Vicar Provincial of the Mission. The Father (John 'Thaddeus) wanted to negotiate with the Khan of Shiraz, but the latter would give no 'reply whatever: it is *about war affairs*. The Father is coming without money, and I know 'well he will need a great deal for his journeys. . . ."

It may be surmised that "war affairs" referred to Portuguese naval pressure in the Gulf: Fr. Leander had come from the seat of the viceroy of Goa and was a Spaniard like Fr. John Thaddeus. For only two or three months later, according to a letter from the Portuguese Fr. Basil from Basra of 26.2.1628:³

"A considerable fleet sailed from Goa some six or seven months ago, without doubt 'with the intention of recapturing Hurmuz by the help of God. But it was broken up by 'a tempest: part reached Masqat, and the other part, they do not yet know here whether 'it went elsewhere or sank: a thing which appears an evident punishment from God for 'our sins. After that, last summer the General of the Straits" (i.e. the Persian Gulf) '*made an attack on Bahrain, the pearl island, which is still in the power of the Shah* and, although 'he destroyed the town and the palm-trees and burnt many vessels, all the same he did 'not succeed in taking it as it was too strong. But this spring, some say, he will return: 'and we shall see what will result, both as regards Bahrain and as regards Hurmuz, matters 'of much importance for India, at least according to public opinion, which counts much 'in such cases: the General captured something else, but of less importance. I sent on to 'Goa the letters from the king of Spain, accompanied by others from the grandees of 'Spain too in regard to a subsidy being paid for twelve of our Religious in these parts— 'which being so, your Reverence will not have so much preoccupation, as it will be a 'material help towards our support. . . ."

It was in 1628 that another element first entered Persia, to complicate still further the situation—for obviously the field in the city at that juncture offered no scope for evangelization, above all for so restricted a number as was sent: it suited the policy of Cardinal Richelieu that the Capuchin Order should be established in the Persian dominions. On 23.6.1628 Frs. Gabriel of Paris and Juste of Beauvais and Pacifique of Provins left Aleppo for Persia, arriving in 25 days. They went to Qazwin.⁴ "The Capuchin Fathers . . . were well received by the 'king, and he has given them houses both here and in Baghdad . . ." wrote Fr. Dimas from Isfahan, 15.12.1628. One of them brought a letter from the king of France: and it was as ambassadors of France that they were regarded for the rest of the century.

¹ Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, 27.6.1626, to Rome.

² O.C.D. 237 b. Perhaps the "matter" and the "mortification" were over the presentation of Pope Gregory XV's Brief of 10.6.1623, calling on 'Abbas I to restore Hurmuz to the Portuguese?

³ O.C.D., 241 g.

⁴ See Fr. Clemente da Terzorio, *Missioni dei Minori Cappuccini*, vol. III, Rome, 1920: 'Missioni di Persia e Mesopotamia.'

"The Augustinians are at Isfahan as ambassadors of the king of Spain; the Carmelites as guests sent by the Pope: the Capuchins are being sent by the king of France . . ."

are the words used in the 'Report' in *S.R.*, vol. 209 (chap. 21). At times there was no little friction.

Towards the end of that year matters had come to a head once more. Imam Quli Khan of Shiraz, to whom clearly was due, and not to his royal master in person (as histories so frequently make it appear), the initiative and initiation as well as the successful results of those extensions of Persian occupation and the Persian frontiers in the regions round the shores of the Gulf, had taken up the gauntlet:¹

"The Duke of Shiraz is making war on the Pasha of Basra and, as now more than ever before he is marching in great strength, it is to be feared that he will make himself master of that country. I have already written to him (Imam Quli Khan) and to others of his principal men, acquaintances of ours, asking that, in case he should capture that country, our house at Basra and the Religious in it should be recommended to his protection. . . ."

Meanwhile, on another side the situation was becoming threatening. A new recruit for the Carmelites, Fr. Dominic of Christ "crossing the desert of Arabia" on his way out to Persia from Aleppo, noted:

"In these parts there is a great preparation for war. It is said that the Vizir, i.e. the "second person" (in Turkey) "after the Grand Signor, has an army of 30,000 to besiege Baghdad. But I believe that, according to what they say, all will stop at that, for the king of Persia has very well provisioned it (Baghdad) with food and munitions, and even well fortified it. . . ."²

The MSS. *Hist. Miss.*³ remarks, with regard to the operations in southern Mesopotamia:

"Despite the defensive measure by the Arabs of flooding the country round Basra, Imam Quli Khan's siege of Basra seemed to be on the point of success, when in January 1629 the news came—a bolt from the blue—that 'Abbas I had expired at Farrahabad: and the news was important enough to make him break off his campaign and retire with all his forces."

This event had occurred on 8.1.1629.⁴ For some time the monarch had been in poor health, it would seem. The Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites, Fr. Dimas, states in his letter of 18.9.1629⁵ from Isfahan:

". . . They say that the king, Shah 'Abbas, passed from this life at the beginning of January of this present year 1629: and that, before he died, he ordered his grandees to make the son of Safi Mirza king, as afterwards came to pass.

"About the 15th of the said month of January there arrived in Isfahan Khusru Mirza, governor of this city, and he was met by an exceptional concourse of all the officials and grandees of Isfahan: one can see that the Shah was already dead when the said Khusru Mirza came to this city, and that he came solely to calm the populace, which had learnt of the king's death. Some eight days had passed since the arrival of the governor when they began in the royal square (Maidan) to blow trumpets and beat drums, giving out that Shah 'Abbas was coming to Isfahan, ill; and part of the populace believed it for the first few days, while others were in doubt and suspected that the Shah might be dead: and so in the city some disturbances began to occur, and in particular thieves went about stealing at nights but, being found at it, some were put to death, as also several other

¹ Fr. Dimas, Isfahan, 15.12.1628, O.C.D. 237 b.

² Fr. Dominic of Christ, 6.12.1628, O.C.D. 237 e.

³ Chap. 23, book 4, part 2.

⁴ According to Beale, *vide* Sir W. Foster's *English Factories in India*.

⁵ O.C.D. 237 b.



SHAH 'ABBAS I

A miniature in the Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, London (No 1920-91-17-013 (2))—Mogul school of painting, about 1618, by the Indian painter Bishindas who was sent to Persia with the embassy from the Emperor Jahangir.

[By permission of the Trustees]

"persons who began to shut their booths on account of the rioting. The governor got together and armed a large number of the citizens, in order to overawe everyone. He even removed from the fort, where the king's treasury is, all the Georgian slaves, and placed there men from the city, so that there should be no revolt. Then he took Sām Mirza, who was to be king, and put him inside the haram, i.e. the place where the women are kept, setting reliable guards there. . . ."

In 1624¹ Fr. John Thaddeus had drawn up, by instructions from his superiors, a long report² on the "Mission of the Discalced Carmelites in Persia": the eighth chapter of it contains an appraisal of Shah 'Abbas, then still alive, all the more deserving of attention, because it comes from a European of sober judgment, who had been *persona grata* with Persians and the Shah himself and living in close touch and frequent conversation with that sovereign for nearly twenty years. It is, moreover, both complementary to and amends the impressions of and his fellow-pioneer, Fr. Paul Simon, had recorded after their first few months in the country in 1608, already quoted:

"The king takes great pride in the nobility of his birth, saying that he is descended from Muhammad. . . . The Quran both Persians and Turks hold . . . but in the interpretation of it they differ and even wear different costumes—the Turks wearing white, the Persians red³ turbans.

" . . . The king of Persia is 63 lunar years of age, but 60 in solar years. He dresses in Persian style, with simplicity, in a long robe: very rarely does he use gold brocade in his clothing unless he be wearing the crown and royal robes in all his majesty. On some of his festival days for the most part he wears red⁴ silk, with a scarlet tunic: in time of warfare red twill and cotton only,⁵ going poorly clad and wearing even rope shoes.

"He is of small stature, with large eyes and a straight nose, and rather fat. Some of his front teeth are missing. He goes with his head completely shaven, contrary to the custom of the Turks, who allow some few hairs to remain on the top of the head. He has very big moustaches and is of a dark complexion. . . . He is quite grey, has his face very burnt and bronzed by the sun (although they say that the skin of his body is white).

"He is bright-witted, martial, mercurial, strong, skilful, healthy, resolute, with a good memory, and sagacious in business.

" . . . He has a very great number of slaves, artisans of all kinds by trade, who work for him. He greatly dislikes lazy people and vagabonds, but particularly beggars. He takes great pleasure in horses. He is very clear-sighted, and it is sufficient when discussing business to drop a hint for him to understand everything; and he penetrates to the smallest niceties. He often makes use of stratagems and strange devices in time of war.

"In countenance he is jolly when in a good mood; but when angry he outdoes the raging of lions. According to the opinions of his astrologers he will shortly die.

"The king has always been most fortunate in his undertakings, because not only has he subjugated those who had rebelled against his father, and caused his feudatories to pay the tribute they had previously refused to pay, but he has taken away from the Turks

¹ He refers in his letter of 26.7.1625 from Shiraz to it:

"Of the great report (on our Mission) another copy is being made for the Visitor also to take away. I have also sent a report on the martyrs with three prints of their history. The account, which was printed there, has many striking mistakes. . . ."

² It is to be found in *S.R.*, vol. 209.

³ and ⁴ In the twentieth century (i.e. before the War of 1914) the wearing of red clothing and turbans by grown men, Shiah, in Persia was taboo, almost to the degree of a religious prescription, the Jews from the Persian Gulf had a distinctive dark red turban, however.

⁵ See the portrait. As regards the painter, Bishndas, the translation of the *Memoirs of (the Mogul Emperor) Jahangir*, by Rogers & Beveridge, vol. II, p. 107, 1909, gives in the Emperor Jahangir's own words:

"At the time I sent Khan Alam to Persia I had sent with him a painter of the name of Bishan Das, who was unequalled in his age for taking likenesses, to take the portraits of the Shah and the chief men of that State and bring them. He . . . especially had taken that of the Shah my brother exceedingly well."

Khan Alam was the chief envoy sent in 1613. The painter was rewarded by the Emperor after his return with an elephant!

"all that they had captured from his father, and even extended his possessions to their hurt. "He has taken Hurmuz from the Portuguese.

"He enjoys making scimitars, arquebuses, bridles and saddles for horses, weaving cloth, "distilling salts, orange-flower water and medicaments, and—in short—with all mechanical "crafts, if not perfect, he is at least somewhat conversant. It is not a matter for surprise "to learn that the Shah takes pleasure in mechanical arts, because in the Levant and "especially Persia a man is considered ignoble and not esteemed, even when of high rank, "if he does not know some art or craft: and often the Fathers have been asked in what "craft they practised. Therefore unable to remain idle the king is now intent on this craft, "now on some other occupation: and from the quickness of his nature he will learn it "rapidly and do it particularly well.

"He has a natural eloquence, which he garbs with tricks of speech and sophistries and "many sharp points and satirical remarks, and with it he will keep a whole brigade occupied "from morn to eve, without once stopping.

"By nature he is cautious, where his own interests are not concerned, and he gives "decisions and governs in a straightforward manner and with the utmost dispatch and "very few words: and for the most part he is ready to listen and in replying arranges so "as not to dwell on every point.

"He does not know how to remain idle and for that reason is so devoted to the chase, "even of birds. Whatsoever time there is left over for him from military practices he "spends on seeing to his armaments, cleaning weapons—which he does with his own hand: "he often visits the stables, in which he has many good horses, which he is wont to distribute "among his soldiers according to the needs of each. He has 30,000 horses in various parts "of the kingdom, from which there come to him a vast number of colts which he has trained "by good horsemasters, whom he keeps for the purpose; and, when he has chosen the best "(of the animals) for himself, he gives the others to whomever he may think fit. The Persians "as a race are practised horsemen, but more than any of them and the best to be seen "in the saddle is the king, who does remarkable feats on horseback: he knows how to shoe "horses and to school them better than anyone else and takes care of them. He has "many breeds . . . and from various countries of the world: from hand to hand, for many "generations, their pedigrees have been and are still being noted with the names of each "one, so that the truth may not be lost.

"He has a very large number of slaves and, in order not to have to feed them all himself, "he puts them to crafts, so that not only do they earn their victuals by this, but he also "makes money out of it. Among the skilled professions he knows and likes to practise "with his own hand is to emasculate many of his slaves: and he does it with such care, "and better than those skilled in that profession, that they are very few who die under "his hands.

"He is superstitious in his actions and guides and regulates his conduct by what his "astrologers tell him. He is very free and easy in his movements, going through the city "on horseback unaccompanied, save for a single man ahead: he eats when and where it "may suit him, without any regularity, and gives audience in all sorts of places and even "in his shirt and drawers.

"He is very suspicious for his life, often changing the bed where he is to sleep, saying "that the world lies on one side of a pair of scales, he on the other, wishing by that to "express that he and his life are worth as much as the whole world. In fine, he exhibits "himself as being a fine trooper who does not know how either to read or to write, and "yet rules with such prudence and skill that he keeps the world upside down and causes "himself to be obeyed with so much awe. He is absolute master in his dominions, which "he has administered by renegades" (i.e. of Christian race) "whom he has enslaved, and "by Khans and Sultans and Wazirs, who at his slightest sign are ready to go off to fight.

"Without exaggeration, the king can put in the field 80,000 horsemen, apart from "adventurers and infantry, of whom he does not take much account. This force is armed

"with scimitars, bows and lances: and many of them now have arquebuses. They are protected by stout helmets and short cuirasses, which stop arrows and arquebuse shots. Many of them drape their horses with very fine, rich trappings, the saddles being set with gold and silver, the bridle and breast-plates of various styles and work. The horses are dexterous and mettlesome, very docile, swift of pace and fierce in battle. . . . For this reason it is no marvel that some of them are sold at 1,000 and 1,300 zecchini, though there are such numbers of them that almost all the army is mounted, and many good ones can be bought cheaply, i.e. at 30, 20 and 15 scudi each, while ordinary animals cost 9, 7 and 6 scudi each. . . .

"The Persians . . . are afraid of artillery, although at times they have not feared to make sudden charges on trenches of the enemy: none the less they have adopted the use of it in their forts. . . .

"The kingdom of Persia, taken alone without its tributary states, is poor in money. . . . The king may have as revenue from the subjugated and tributary kingdoms 10 million pieces of gold—rather more than less—apart from the private revenue of the Crown. As to expenditure which the king incurs over the fortresses, magistrates, workshops, grandees and his family, it is less than one-third of the revenue, the more so because to pay for his cavalry all the towns, villages and forts are assigned, so that every person with a title or of good family holds them with the sole obligation of serving the king in time of war, under penalty of death. . . ."

From the mass of first-hand information then available to him the Carmelite compiler in the early 18th century of the *MSS. Hist. Miss.* summed up¹ the estimates given of strong points and blemishes in 'Abbas I:

"Though he could barely write or read, he was excellently informed of the customs, lives and other facts regarding the sovereigns and men of distinction at all foreign Courts, both by his agents and the gold, which he spent in obtaining news. The lengthy conversations which he had with, and the entertainments he gave to foreigners, especially Europeans, were intended largely to instruct himself in affairs of the world—a real school, wherein he employed himself in drawing out the inmost thoughts of men skilled in various branches of knowledge. He introduced the arts not only from Europe, but from India and farther afield, seeking everywhere for teachers of them, whom he held in esteem. . . . In undertaking the construction of palaces, mosques, shrines, madrasehs, caravansarais, and aqueducts, and in his liberality to foreigners, he displayed magnificence and taste."

(Even in the twentieth century the number of "Shah 'Abbasi" buildings throughout Persia, their fine dimensions, solidity and imposing appearance is remarkable.)

"He was moderate in his dress, and"—a curious trait—"would turn the back of his turban to the front."

" . . . With all this information about foreign affairs he possessed minute information of every small township in his kingdom. . . . By the terrible nature of the executions, which he ordered, he cleansed the country of plotters against his government, of robbers and of courts of injustice. To make himself feared and to win popularity he adopted any method to his hand."

As to his vices the Carmelites close to the palace had ample occasion to note them, and to me reference has been made: in cruelty they considered he had not his equal:²

" . . . He succeeded his father by having his brothers suppressed: he killed, or mutilated his own three sons. For a mere suspicion, a fit of temper, or a jest he killed notables and subjects: a single shadow across his ambition was a capital crime in itself and he

¹ *MSS. Hist. Miss.*, chap. 27, book 5, part 3.

² In ruthlessness 'Abbas I suggests a comparison with Ivan Grozni, almost his contemporary.

“was wont to say that he would have killed a hundred children in order to reign alone for a single day. To this end he employed a vast dissimulation, hiding in his own heart his real intentions and deceiving others. . . .”

After receiving news of his death, on 2.2.1629 the Factors of the East India Company at Gāmbrun, William Burt and John Benthall, reported¹ to headquarters of the company at Surat:

“This king . . . inhumanely hath added to the numberless terrors of his conscience the death of his owne and onlie sonne, causing his eyes to be cut fourth with a rasour: whose owne child was a spectator of his father’s misery, whome in his rage hee bereaved of life as afterward did unto himselfe by poysonous pills, the king having since sent for the sonne of Merza Sophie, who was elder brother of the last unfortunate prince, who was also bereaved of life by the same cruell hand. . . .”

Moreover, before ‘Abbas I died he issued an infamous edict² that whoever of a Christian family should turn Muslim should inherit possession of the property of all his relatives, up to the seventh generation. By 1654, i.e. in twenty years, it was calculated that in order to escape beggary more than 50,000 Christians were renegades and lost to the Christian Faith.³

A careful quartermaster and energetic adjutant in particular, it is as a successful general, an organizer of military forces, that, judged by all the detail available in these manuscripts, ‘Abbas I would seem to have the best title to the regard of world opinion and his countrymen—albeit it was his fortune that his reconquest of the border lands lost mainly in his father’s reign was rendered easier by a period of indecision and military incapacity on the Turkish side, and his successors were to lose by degrees everything, so that of those reconquests nothing except Gilan, Laristan and eastern Khurasan remain within the frontiers of Iran. More than sufficient has been revealed above to show how utterly at variance with the facts, how tragically mistaken and untrue was the statement in several editions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: “To his Christian subjects he was a kind and tolerant ruler”: the Armenian race especially has reason to curse his tyrannous transplantation of scores of thousands, followed by systematic forced conversion of the scattered units; while Georgians, Circassians, Chaldaeans all suffered in their thousands.

The Shah was already dead when, unaware of that event, Pope Urban VIII addressed him on 8.3.1629 a Brief (Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 43, fol. 44) explaining that the Carmelites had no worldly interests in Persia, but were intent on serving God: so he asked the Shah to allow them access to himself, and reminded ‘Abbas I of the many previous relations he had had with the Holy See, the envoys he had sent—an invitation, in fact, to a return to the former friendlier terms and greater consideration for the Religious in his realms. The text is given in the Appendix of the Latin Briefs. Translated it runs:

“Pope Urban VIII to the most puissant and illustrious King of the Persians.

“Most puissant and illustrious King, greetings and the light of Divine grace. It is to the will of Him who is almighty over all rulers that a life which despises earthly vanity has been consecrated by the Discalced Carmelite priests commissioned by Us for the present to Persia and everywhere spreading the Kingdom of heaven and the rule of religion. Now since they rate a voluntary poverty above wealth that breeds enmity, and wander through the most distant lands destitute of everything, yet they will approach Your Highness equipped with copious supplies of those praises that can among all races be considered favours from heaven. We hope that a virtue that consults the common

¹ See *Factory Records*, East India Company—Early Documents relating to Persia, 1620–97.

² MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 27, book 5, part 3.

³ Vide also the letter from Fr. (afterwards Bishop) Paolo Piromalli, O.P. from Abranar in Nakhchiwan to the Sac. Cong., 18.1.1632, *S.R.*, vol. 104: “. . . The Persians have the custom in this Armenia, when a Christian becomes a ‘Turk’, to dispossess his relatives up to the 7th generation and give everything to the renegade.” The terrible working of this decree will be noted later in this work, as far as Sultan Husain’s reign.

"salvation of the nations will open for them there a ready access to the royal throne. Nevertheless We have wished that through them this excellent witness to Our Pontifical affection should be delivered to You. For since Europe has more than once received with open arms ambassadors of the Persian Kingdom hastening to the Roman Pontiff, You are believed to be kindly disposed towards Us and the Christian name. Then again all men surmise that no light weight attaches in Your Highness's mind to a commendation from that prince whose decision the most powerful Kings of the Christian commonwealth obey, whose friendship You, being Yourself so very renowned for might in war, have sought by letters and embassies. Undoubtedly since it appertains to a king to fill the world by the renown of His name, happily will the glory of the Persian ruler triumph in the approbation of Christianity, if by His protection and favour He shall defend the Religious, priests whom the Roman Church sends into the Kingdom of Your Highness to the most remote races, made to extend as she has been both beyond ocean's farthest coast and the sun's daily highway. Certainly those who have returned to Rome from Your land laden with marks of Your kindness have been listened to by Italy undoubtedly as most grateful proclaimers of Your outstanding deeds. Now those who will hand over to You these Apostolic letters are altogether worthy to owe a kindness to You as they long to offer themselves as acceptable victims to the living God for the salvation of Your provinces and the true bliss of Your Highness, for whom We Ourselves will ever be eager by solicitous prayer to gain the light of the Holy Spirit and the protection of the Divine Arm.

"Given at Rome at S. Peter's under the Fisherman's Ring 8th March 1629 in the sixth year of Our Pontificate."

Almost contemporaneously with 'Abbas I there disappeared from the Persian scene—the world, in fact—two other figures who have figured prominently in these pages.

Sir Robert Sherley, in 1622 in Rome where as already mentioned two Briefs had been issued in his favour against his return to Persia, had in the following year been sent on a mission to Poland whence, in view of the favour Shah 'Abbas had been showing to Poles at that period, he had pressed the Praepositus General of the Carmelites to send back with him to Isfahan four Polish Carmelites, and where he fell ill.¹ In 1623 he had arrived once more in England and did not sail for the East until 1627, when he was accompanying an envoy, specially dispatched by the English king to Persia and other courts, Sir Dodmore Cotton.²

"Our kinge's Majestie's ambassador came safely hither in company of Sir Robert Sherley and his lady,"³

wrote President Kerridge from Surat, 4.1.1628, to the East India Company.

On 16.12.1627 they had sailed from Swally for Persia in English ships and landed at Gāmbnun in the early days of 1628:

"Don Robert has reached Isfahan in company with an ambassador from his king, going to see the Shah . . ."

occurs in a letter of Fr. Dimas from Isfahan, 2.5.1628.⁴ They were received by 'Abbas I at Ashraf on the Caspian, 25.5.1628:⁵

"Sir D. Cotton obtained a very gracious reception from Shah 'Abbas. . . . Sir R. Sherley was slighted by the Shah and his favourite, Muhammad Ali Baig. . . ."⁶

¹ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 17, book 4, part 2.

² Or (Dormer?) Cotton—*Encycl. Brit.*, 10th ed., quoting Sir C. Markham's *History of Persia*.

³ East India Company records.

⁴ *Encycl. Brit.*, cited.

⁵ O.C.D. 237 b., to Fr. Prosper.

⁶ According to Sir C. Markham's *History*.

On their return journey, within a fortnight of each other, in July 1628¹ both these Englishmen had perished of fever at Qazwin, and their plans being brought to naught. With the passionate conjugal feelings of her race Teresa Sherley determined to transport her husband's body back to Europe for burial: and so she came to emulate the even greater devotion of the 'Pilgrim', Pietro della Valle, who from the time his Chaldaean first wife, Ma'ani, died at Minab on the shore of the Persian Gulf, 30.12.1621, through years of wandering in Sind and India and Mesopotamia, always carrying her coffined remains with him, rested not till he had deposited them in the tomb of his family in the Ara Cœli church, Rome, in the spring of 1626. Europeans of today who have some notion of the difficulties to be overcome in taking a corpse from the interior of the Middle East to England or neighbouring countries can but marvel at the courage such a task meant three centuries ago. Yet Shiah Muslims set the example with their piety towards their dead in transporting them often a thousand miles for the satisfaction of burial in the precincts of the shrines round Karbala.

When exactly Robert Sherley's remains left Isfahan has not been noticed in the correspondence preserved, for reasons of state prevented Teresa from taking them with her:

"She leaves deposited in *our* House the body of the Count, to be sent in due course, "wherever she may be . . ."

mentioned Fr. Dimas in a letter of 20.9.1629 to Fr. Paul Simon in Rome: and in another of 31.7.1631:

". . . We hold in deposit 20 Tumans of hers, with instructions to send it to her in "Aleppo . . . these 20 Tumans include 2 Tumans, which are to pay for the forwarding "of the Count's body, wherever and whenever she may direct me. . . ."

It was inside the famous Carmelite church of S. Maria della Scala, across the Tiber in Rome, that he was eventually buried, and where the inscription on his tombstone may still be plainly read:

D.O.M.
Roberto Sherleio, Anglo nobilissimo
Comiti Caesareo, Equiti Aurato, Rodulphi secundi Imperatoris legato
ad Scia Abbam regem Persarum, et ejusdem
Regis secundo ad Romanos Pontifices, Imperatores, et Reges Hispaniae,
Angliae, Poloniae, Moscoviae, Mogori, aliosque Europae Principes,
Inclyto Oratori
Theresia Sampsonia Amazonitis, Sampsuffi Circassiae Principis
filia, viro amantissimo, et sibimet posuit, illius ossibus,
suisque laribus
in Urbem e Perside pietatis ergo translatis
Annos nata LXXIX-MDCLXVIII

Even before the death of Robert Sherley, however, a very serious predicament had befallen his wife. The account with full details—presumably forwarded to Rome by the Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites, then Fr. Dimas of the Cross—either is no longer available among the archives of the Order, or has escaped the notice of the present compiler of these annals: perhaps the author of *En Persia* drew on it for the animated description of the scenes which he paints (not without discrepancies, however) on pp. 35-42, of vol. 3. There is besides an account, which MSS. *Hist. Miss.* has in chap. 21, book 6, part 3, differing considerably in parts and points and obscured by additions of 18th century, florid style. Hereunder is given in translation a contemporary version, which formed an enclosure to a letter addressed by the

¹ East India Company records.

Visitor General of the Carmelites, Fr. Epiphanius of S. John Baptist, from Goa on 25.12.1631, to the Secretary of the Sac. Congregation in Rome¹—doubtless he had so received it, or made a résumé of the full details, from the Vicar Provincial, Fr. Dimas, in Isfahan. It is headed:

“Brief narrative of a noteworthy event, which occurred at the Persian Court to Donna Teresa Sherley, together with the Discalced Carmelite Fathers.

“The Countess Donna Teresa Sherley, a Circassian by race and Christian by religion, “was from her earliest years taken to the Court of the Shah of Persia and, there brought “up with good training of her character, was given in wife by the Shah himself to Don “Robert Sherley, an Englishman by race and Catholic in religion. . . .

“Having discharged his embassy to his great credit and that of his wife, whom he had “taken with him for certain honourable reasons, they returned to the Persian Court, which “at that time was at Qazwin, and were there received with marked distinction by the “Shah and rewarded with great dignities and gifts of high value. For that reason they “were the object of the envy of some of the grandees of the Court, such as is usually the “case: and these men contrived to get them into discredit with the Shah by saying that “Donna Teresa, before she became a Christian, had professed the Muhammadan religion, “and that she had been baptized by the Discalced Carmelites² to the hurt of their false “religion.

“By this means they” (the jealous grandees) “succeeded in making them fall into disgrace “with the Shah; although the story was false and a calumny, still for all that it was published “abroad in the Court that the king intended to have her burnt. When the Count heard “this, he was so much upset that it was sufficient to bring on him a very serious illness, “from which he died at the end of 15 days, while the Countess remained always courageous “in spirit and resisting the many blows which were aimed at her from all sides.

“Don Robert died at the Court of the king, having tried to make a confession and “receive Communion like a true son of the Roman Church; but it was not possible because “of the distance of 15 days’ journey which separates Qazwin from Isfahan, where are the “Discalced Carmelite Fathers, to whom he was accustomed to make his confession, when “the Court was staying in Isfahan. In short, as it was impossible for him to obtain this “consolation he did many acts of contrition and gave many signs of true and exceeding “great penitence. After all this he died, and by his instructions his corpse was carried to “Isfahan and buried in the church of the Discalced Carmelites with the customary funeral “Masses, Offices of the Dead, almsgiving and other obsequies.

“Meanwhile, no sooner had the first trouble ended than immediately there followed “greater ones, for the Shah at the instance of her persecutors summoned the Countess “before him and questioned her as to the reasons why they were so incensed against her. “In order not to harm by her replies those men who were persecuting her, she gave him “no answer at all: on which account her fortitude was much commended by the Shah: “and he told her not to be afraid, for it would be harder for him to put a woman to death “than 100 men.

“All the same his officials did not cease to take away from her, under this pretext of “her religion, all she possessed in effects, jewels and wealth: and after all this our Lord “ordained that she should become very seriously ill, so that she should have the greater “reason for exercising her patience, and that the greatness and nobility of her soul should “be displayed in such great trials.

“While she was in this condition, worse from her illness, she had herself carried to Isfahan “in order to be able to receive the Sacraments from the hands of the Fathers, to whom,

¹ *S R.*, vol. 104 (Lettere di Spagna, Armenia, etc.), p. 299 *et seq.*

² That she was baptized by the Carmelites on 2.2.1608 is a definite fact, recorded in their list of baptisms: had she not been baptized by Orthodox rite in Circassia, then?

"many years previously, she had made the profession of the Roman Catholic Faith: and, "on arrival in Isfahan, after having endured endless trials on the road, she received Communion as a viaticum with the utmost devoutness. But, reserving her for greater triumphs, "the Lord willed that she should recover her health, and that it should come into her "mind to retire to Christian lands in order to be able to live more tranquilly there. Because "there is in Persia a law forbidding any woman to leave the country without first obtaining "a special permit to that effect, the Carmelite Fathers tried to obtain for her this licence "through the intermediary of the Khan of Shiraz, who was very willing to do her the "favour, had it not been frustrated by a favourite of his, who was greatly set on marrying "the Countess and for that motive suggested to the Khan that, as she had been a Muhammadan before becoming a Christian, it was not expedient that she should leave the "kingdom to go to Christian countries: and thus the issue of the permit was prevented, "and the former difficulties recommenced, and after a short time an order was given out "for her to appear, within so many hours, in person in a mosque, where she was to be "examined by a chief Mulla (who is, as it were, a senior priest of their religion).

"That appeared unsuitable to the Carmelite Fathers, and so they obtained from the "Khan of Shiraz that the place for this examination, which it was proposed to hold, should "be changed from the mosque to the church of the Fathers in question: when the Mulla "rejected that, they came to an agreement on a third course, i.e. that it should take place "in the house of a steward of the Khan of Shiraz, a great friend of the Fathers, by whom "the Countess was accompanied, and there questioned for the space of a whole hour many "questions were put to her, promises and threats made her, and an infinity of other devices. "But she persevered, steadily confessing the Faith of Christ, and confounded the hopes "of the Mulla.

"So, abandoning the undertaking for the time being to his great mortification and "regret, he gave orders that she should not be allowed to leave the house in question.

"However, no attention was paid to this matter, and she was sent back to her own "house with every respect and to the satisfaction of the Fathers.

"The persecution quieted down for the space of one month, and then broke out again "more fiercely than before.

"It came into the head of a great friend of the Khan of Shiraz to marry the Countess "and by that means make himself the master of her wealth and bring her back to the "Muhammadan religion. With this in view, he sent many of his servants to the convent "of the Carmelite Fathers in order to ascertain from them where the lady was, and with "orders to bring her by force to his house.

"The Fathers replied that they did not know where she was, and in the meantime sent "to let her know that she should take refuge in the church of (the Fathers of) S. Augustine "and thence cross to Julfa, the town of the Christian Armenians, about two miles' distance "from Isfahan.

"She (thus) escaped this first encounter and withdrew into a convent of Armenian nuns, "who follow the Rule of S. Basil for the government of their Order, though they regard "our holy Mother, Teresa, as their patron.

"This persecution was then completely diverted and launched against the Discalced "Carmelite Fathers, as it had failed to have any result with Donna Teresa: in her stead "the Fathers were seized, bound, maltreated and led to the house of that favourite of the "Khan of Shiraz—neither the king nor the Khan having any knowledge of this—it was "demanded of them that they should declare where Donna Teresa was, and they were "threatened with being tortured with pincers should they not reveal (to their interrogators) "where she was, together with endless other insults: they were told among other things "that the religion they professed was false and lying.

"To all this the Fathers remained fearless and firm, refusing to disclose the whereabouts "of Donna Teresa and answering that their Faith was holy and good and true.

"Finally, realizing that all such insults and ill-treatment were of no use and avail

"whatsoever, the oppressors sent back to their convent the Fathers, who were content and 'honoured at having been found worthy to suffer ill-treatment and insults for the sake of 'the holy name of Jesus Christ.

"The persecution was not so soon allayed, for at once the Mulla mentioned above began "once more to bring up this question, and brought pressure to bear on the Khan of Shiraz "for the case to be referred to the magistrate.

"As the Khan of Shiraz was very well disposed towards the Fathers he made excuses, "saying that the matter did not concern him, but Rustam Khan,¹ governor of Qazwin, "who, learning of the business, sent some of his subordinates to summon the Fathers and "those men, happening to meet a servant-maid of the Countess going to the church, arrested "her and by dint of various insults and blows succeeded in finding out where the Countess, "her mistress, was.

"The latter similarly they arrested and led, bound, before the governor" (the Daruga, or Rustam Khan meant?) "subjecting her to much violence and indignity along the streets.

"The Countess and the Fathers met in the house of the governor in question, and by "them she was encouraged to confess the Christian Faith, and their exhortations were not "without much advantage to her for, when the judge put her to the question, she showed "the greatest constancy in professing it and declaring that, if it were need be, she would "die for it a thousand times.

"When the judge heard her say that, he told her that she lied and he would have her "burnt alive, if she did not make profession of the Muhammadan religion.

"But, as the Countess made no account at all of the threats, the judge said to her that "he would have her thrown down from a tower . . . to this the Countess made a retort "in like manner, saying that such a method would suit her better, because she would the "more quickly have overcome death and attained to glory: and, waxing hot against the "judge, she upbraided him severely and seriously, saying that this ill-treatment was not "the reward deserved by her husband for his service to the Shah.

"Shamed and abashed by such a rejoinder, the judge put an end to the questioning "and went off to report all that had passed in this affair to the governor who, when he "learnt the result, sent away the Mullas who had been the prime movers in this persecution "and dispatched the Countess to her house. He thoroughly satisfied himself on a later "occasion that the Countess would not deny the Faith of Jesus Christ to embrace the "Muhammadan religion and, at the request of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers, gave them "a permit authorizing her to live without hindrance in the Christian religion, exempt from "anyone making a charge against her on that account.

"With this decision an end was put to this business. . . ."

The other two more copious accounts add that during the final and most strenuous 'trial' Lady Sherley wore on her breast a small relic of the flesh of S. Teresa, given her in Madrid by the Carmelite Mother Beatrice, niece of the saint: and, after her impassioned defence and constancy, it was observed by several persons to be wet with tiny spots of blood. Without loss of time the Carmelites asked and obtained from the Khan of Shiraz a permit for her to leave Persia, and this was done in September 1629. References to her departure observed in the letters of Fr. Dimas preserved in the Carmelite archives in Rome are the following:

"18.9.1629. . . . The lady Countess Donna Teresa, who was the consort of the late "Count Palatine Don Robert Sherley, leaves here for Rome: she is a lady of great spirit "and valour . . . in these parts she has been an apostle, and a martyr confessed and "professed. . . ."

"20.9.1629. . . . She has lost part of her effects and may have need of help. . . ."

¹ This was the former Khusru Mirza, governor-Daruga of Isfahan under 'Abbas I, a Georgian and a renegade to Islam (as the father of Imam Quli Khan of Shiraz, an Armenian, had also been), *vide* a letter from Fr. Dimas, 29.7.1633, to P. della Valle, Rome, in *S.R.*, vol. 104 (V), who mentions Rustam Khan then back in Georgia.

Several letters of recommendation—one to the French consul at Aleppo—were written by Fr. Dimas too; that in French, perhaps from the pen of Fr. Philip of the Most Holy Trinity, afterwards Praepositus General of the Order, has the words:

“Après la mort duquel cette honeste dame a esté grandement persecutée de ces Mores
 “pour la faire laisser nostre sainte foy, premièrement par promesses luy offrant quantité
 “d’argent et des partis, si elle se vouloit marier, les plus avantageux; mais comme ils virent
 “que les promesses ne pouvaient rien envers elle, ils vinrent aux menasses: luy disant que
 “si elle ne laissoit la foy des Chrestiens qu’ils la bruleroient ou qu’ils la précipiteroient du
 “haut d’une tour: à qui elle respondoit avec esprit viril que s’ils préparent le feu qu’elle
 “mesme s’y jetteroit dedans pour la défense de sa foy, ce qui estonna grandement ces
 “mores. . . .”

The author of *En Persia* (who in telling the story, pp. 34-42, has been mistaken in placing the last part of the scene at Shiraz, doubtless confusing the ‘duke’ or Daruga with Imam Quli Khan, whereas from the presence of Fr. Dimas and allusion to the Armenian convent for women it is clear that it happened in Isfahan) adds the information that Teresa, Lady Sherley remained three years at Constantinople, receiving there, 21.6.1634, a certificate from the Commissary General of the Dominicans in the East as to her pious and good conduct during her residence. On 27.12.1634¹ she entered Rome, where she had a benevolent welcome from Pope Urban VIII, who recommended her to the spiritual guidance of the Carmelites: and, purchasing a house near the church of S. Maria della Scala, she lived there the rest of her long life.

The other disappearance from Persia, and barely two months before the death of Shah ‘Abbas, was of the pioneer, Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Elisaeus, who on 2.11.1628 set out from Isfahan:² it may have been on business concerning the Armenians or perhaps as a Procurator for the Mission to the Chapter General, but in no contemporary letter has the specific reason been remarked; he took with him letters from Shah ‘Abbas, today untraceable, although they reached Pope Urban VIII safely, as the latter acknowledges in his Brief of 9.1.1633.³ On account of some trouble with the Turkish Customs which really concerned another person, he was arrested and imprisoned for a time in Aleppo and was so found by the Visitor General, Fr. Epiphanius, and other Carmelites on their passage through Aleppo in the spring.⁴ It was not till 12.9.1629 that he quitted Naples, and on the 16th of that month he entered Rome, going to kiss the feet of Pope Urban at Castelgandolfo, 29.10.1629, when he presented credentials from the Armenian bishops at Julfa.⁵ It would seem that the Armenians of Julfa, having sent many letters to Rome asking for spiritual assistance and having received no acknowledgment, had given Fr. John Thaddeus a commission to treat on their behalf, *inter alia*, (a) for an Armenian seminary to be formed, (b) a ‘Frank’ superior to be given them, (c) the Old and New Testaments to be printed in Armenian and sent out with other books.⁶ There is a statement attached to his ‘Report’, doubtless⁷ in the archives of the Sac. Congregation, to the effect that:

“The Father carries a commission from the Armenians and archbishop of their town . . .

¹ Fr. Dimas’ letter, 13.8.1636 to Fr. Paul Simon: “I am greatly rejoiced that the lady Countess has at length arrived “there (in Rome). . . .”

² See Fr. Dimas, 15.12.1628, O.C.D. 237 b.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 109, also gives, in a “List of the Books brought from Persia by Fr. John Thaddeus for the use of the Sac. Cong. de Propaganda Fide and that of his Order and his Mission . . .”, among the manuscripts, some 23 in number, (a) a translation of the Gospels in Persian, (b) his own translation of the Psalms of David—perhaps the copy now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, unless that is the one presented to Shah ‘Abbas at Qazwin, (c) a Quran in Arabic, and another version in Persian: and—most interesting of all, but where to be found today?—(d) “A book in Persian of certain letters from “the Sovereign Pontiffs and other Christian princes sent to Shah ‘Abbas, with replies from the same king as well as other “written petitions and replies, exchanged between the said king and the Christians, and the Shah’s officials, from 1608 “till 1623 and 1627,” (e) “Annals and Report of the Mission of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers from the beginning up “to the present, in Latin, Italian and Spanish by the said Father. . . .”

⁴ *MSS. Hist. Miss.*, chap. 25, book 5, part 3.

⁶ Presumably the schismatics are meant.

⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 354.

⁷ See *S.R.*, vol. 209.

"to state that they desire a 'Frank' head, who can protect them, and they wish our Holy Father to protect them, saying also that, if they are in error in matters of faith, it is through ignorance and having no one to teach them. But, whenever the Holy See shall have warned them of their errors, they offer to amend these and obey whatever the Holy See commands. They ask for a college to be made in Rome for their boys, so that these may be there instructed in the Christian religion according to the Roman rite and on their return to Persia instruct others. To the upkeep of this the richer Armenians said they were willing to contribute annually. Their request regarding the printing of religious books, they added, arose through the books they had possessed having been partly lost in the wars, partly become old and full of errors by copyists. . . ."

The MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chapter 37, book 5, part 3, adds the information that one of the 'commissions', which the Armenians begged Fr. John Thaddeus to undertake for them was that, having taken into their hands the entire silk trade from Persia computed to be worth 6,000,000 in Persian money (save for the share done by the English), they petitioned the Pope to allow them to open establishments in the Papal States for the sale of silk, and to furnish them with letters to other Christian sovereigns with the like end in view. If admitted to the Papal States, etc., they promised to live in a Catholic way, with their own rites, but with their priests in obedience to Holy Church.¹ An abstract of the proceedings of the Sac. Cong. de Prop. Fide, dated 19.3.1630 (with Cardinal Ubaldini charged with the enquiry) records a decision that several cardinals and prelates should hear Fr. John Thaddeus verbally in respect of the request by the Armenians of Julfa: that in due course (it is not clear whether on that day or in July) Cardinals Borghese and Ubaldini and the Cardinal of S. Sisto did hear him at the palace of Cardinal Borghese, when it was resolved that, if the suppliant Armenians were Catholics, they might be allowed dwellings to be erected at their own expense, together with the franchise of the ports only, in the Papal States and that, as to the college, it would be constructed, when the necessary funds had been provided. The books desired would be printed in Armenian in Rome at the cost of the suppliants, when the said books could be purged of errors.

During the following year or so, the Sac. Congregation, then with Mgr Ingoli as secretary, appears to have come to the conclusion that a resident Latin bishop in Persia was a desirability, e.g. in the minutes² made in the secretariat one reads:

"On the need for making a bishop in Persia.

"From the letters of the missionaries in Persia asking for faculties for consecrating the oils and chrism there is clearly to be seen the need that kingdom has of a Catholic bishop, and of the Latin rite, who would be able not only to consecrate oils and chrism, but also to ordain priests and perform the other episcopal functions. In addition to that mentioned there are other reasons of consequence:

"(a) since the road for the conversion of Persians is being made accessible, according to what the Capuchins write, it would be as well to receive the converts into Holy Church with the Latin rites, so that the Armenian rite, which contains various errors derived from the Greek rite and in general, should not become current among them: this would be all the better done with a bishop, because simple missionaries will not be able to prevent Persians from being inclined to the Armenian rite, seeing that our rite would not please Persians (with their vainglorious and arrogant minds) owing to it lacking the majestic episcopal dignity which they can see in use among the Armenians.³

"(b) this bishop could in due time ordain Persians themselves who will gather a greater

¹ The difficulties, which arose in the eighteenth century in some of their Italian colonies, e.g. Leghorn, Venice, over the schismatic obstinacy of some Armenian merchants and their priests, will be noted in due course.

² S.R., vol. 209, p. 91.

³ To those who can look back on the result, and who have seen the two races at close quarters, such reasoning is quite unformed and mere theory: there was no movement for conversion from Islam and, if there had been, it would not have been to take the religion of a subject-race, rather downtrodden, like the Armenians.

"harvest in converting their own compatriots than our Religious could do: and the experience of the Augustinians and the Carmelites, who for so many years have been in Persia, has afforded a practical illustration of this truth, seeing that up till now few Persians have been converted.

"(c) because in the primitive church they acted after this manner, appointing indeed bishops and priests from among the very peasantry, who have given the results now seen.

"The provision of income for the bishop is no obstacle, because just as in Illyria the Bishop of Macarsa, and in Bosnia the Bishop of Scardona, who are friars, live in the convents along with the Friars Minor and it turns out excellently, so a Discalced Carmelite might be appointed, to live among the Carmelites (in my opinion Fr. John Thaddeus would be very good, because he knows the languages and has the other qualifications necessary), or else an Augustinian could be appointed (although, as the Augustinians are Portuguese, it does not appear to me that they should be preferred to Carmelites. . . .)"

This exposition was perhaps the 'writing' mentioned in the *Acta* of the Sacr. Congregation and cited by the late Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M., in his *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10, viz.:

"p. 322. 7.9.1629. On the presentation by Cardinal Bentivolo of a writing regarding the assignment of a Latin bishop to Persia, the Sacr. Congregation considered that for the reasons brought forward in the writing in question a Latin bishop ought to be appointed in the country in question . . ."

and (p. 335) in the sitting of the Congregation of 2.10.1629:

"His Holiness approved the decree of the Sacr. Congregation regarding the placing of a Latin bishop in Persia. . . ."¹

From the first the Sacr. Congregation thought of Fr. John Thaddeus himself: see the *Acta* for the session on 30.10.1629:

"Cardinal Bentivolo having reported that Fr. John Thaddeus, of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, who was for 22 years in Persia and is versed in several languages and known to and liked by the king and chief Persians, Armenians and Georgians, might be promoted to the episcopal dignity with the title of 'Tres Ecclesiae' in Persia, the Sacr. Congregation said that the General of the Order should be heard . . ." (i.e. on the proposal).

But Fr. John Thaddeus was unwilling to accept such office, it would appear, for there is on record² a:

"Memorandum" (discorso) "for the cardinals who have to hear the General and Carmelite Fathers regarding the objection of Fr. John Thaddeus to accepting the bishopric of the 'Three Churches' in Persia:

"The rules of the Reformed Carmelites ought not to prevent a nomination being accepted, but only forbid it being sought and it being accepted except under orders by whatever person is in a position to give them. But this had already been done under Paul V in the case of the see of Ragusa, while in infidel countries a bishopric is a burden and a path to martyrdom rather than to glorification and pomp.

"At present only a Carmelite could be chosen for Persia, because there is no one else acquainted with the language and customs. Resident subjects in the country are all of

¹ Note this occurred prior to the arrival of Fr. John Thaddeus in Rome on October 16th and his audience of the Pope on the 29th.

² See *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 196.

"Latin rite, and an Augustinian could not be made bishop because of *their status as representatives and agents of the king of Portugal*,¹ and because of the state of war existing at present "between the Portuguese and Persians, so that they are in disfavour, and Antonio de Gouvea "had to leave—he was a Portuguese Augustinian.

"The Carmelites went to Persia by orders of Clement VIII and are there as persons "from His Holiness, and are called 'Friars of the Pope'.² All in the country know that "they were sent out, and live there for the assistance of Christians, and not for affairs of "state: and so they are the more liked by the king and the Persians. . . ."

It may be conjectured that opposition was maintained, the matter left in abeyance, for nothing more is recorded under specific dates for some eighteen months.

Fr. John Thaddeus had been consulted as to his views, and another minute³ records:

"With regard to the bishop to be created for Persia. From my conversation with Fr. "John I have gathered that it would be best to make as bishop in Persia someone qualified "from among the secular clergy, a person with learning and an inherited private income, "so as to be able to live with some style at the Court of so great a sovereign and do credit "to the Apostolic See and, having authority from the Shah to be able to purchase land "and select sites, make purchases and in a short time form a good income for the bishops "who succeeded him.

"If a friar were appointed, even from his own Order, discords would be likely to arise "between the bishop and Religious to the great hurt of the propagation of the Faith, "particularly among the Armenians. . . . If a friar were appointed, besides that the small "difference in his ordinary dress would fail to create in the Shah and his officials the "reverence and respect which would accrue, were a secular appointed, the friars and "missionaries would be more in agreement under a secular than under a regular bishop. "Therefore, as Fr. John is more in favour of such a bishop, I consider it would be well to "fall in with his opinion: (a) because he will serve with more zeal a prelate appointed in "accordance with his own view, (b) because, as on this question the Sacr. Congregation "has no information about conditions in Persia, it behoves it to depend on the opinion of "the Father named, who has been 25 years in that country—and we have irrefutable "evidence of the goodness of his life and habits and, as to the latter, also the experience "of the past two years,⁴ for he has kept to such a strict life that he might have been a novice, "making a home of his cell. . . ."

Then consulted, on 22.5.1631⁵ Fr. John Thaddeus humbly disclaimed any competence to give an opinion:

"In sending a bishop to Persia their Eminences the Cardinals consider that it should "be done to the satisfaction of Fr. John, and someone fancied by him dispatched, and "because of that he is pressed to name some person suitable for such a charge.

"Now, as to what Mgr Ingoli, Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation has asked me regarding "the selection of a bishop for Persia, I reply that shortly after I arrived" (i.e. in Italy) "from Spain I departed for Persia, where I have been about 25 years, and since my return "I have been in Rome almost without leaving my cell for two years past. For that reason "I have no information, nor even do I consider myself competent to judge whether such "and such a person be so eminent, and possess such qualities as they desire—that only "our lord the Pope, the Sacred Congregation and our Superiors can judge well: and I do "not venture to name anybody lest—were it to turn out not a success—the fault should be "mine. . . . And then, as far as I am concerned, I have always served God, the Apostolic

¹ See also the 'Report' of Fr. John Thaddeus, of 1624, in *S.R.*, vol. 209: ". . . The Augustinians are at Isfahan as "ambassadors of the king of Spain: the Carmelites as guests sent by the Pope. . . ."

² *Idem.* ³ *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 258. ⁴ This indicates that this minute must be dated 1631. ⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 204.

"See and my Order as a simple Religious, and as such I have taken a vow to go to any mission wherever I am ordered to go, and I am most ready to do so—the humbler the position the more obliged I should consider myself to shed my blood and give my life a thousand times, if I were able, for the glory of Christ and the propagation of the holy Faith. In conclusion, reflecting that I am in a cell, without occupying myself with missions, I shall abide by the order of my Superiors and remain resigned to do the will of God and attend only to the salvation of my soul. . . ."

The Sacr. Congregation also wished diligent enquiry made as to the attitude of the Carmelite Order to a nomination being made from its ranks, for:

"it was given to be understood that the Order is usually opposed to the missions, and would willingly extinguish the mission in Persia and the others in India—which agrees with what has been observed in past years about this Order. In the Persian mission, undertaken largely at the expense¹ of the Sacr. Congregation, to go out to it is considered more of a (temporary) "visit than a" (fixed) "mission, and the return of the Religious sent is" (eagerly) "awaited. It is to be seen also in letters from India, where the Order has closed some mission posts,² which were making much progress, and recalled the missionary Fathers. Then, too, Fr. Epiphanius had been against founding missions in Arabia on some pretexts vaguely explained to the Sacr. Congregation. Further, the students at the seminary at Rome have diminished in numbers: language courses have not been initiated.³ Letters from the Praepositus General, produced by Fr. John Thaddeus, indicate that the former is opposed to missions, and at the next Chapter General this question is likely to be discussed. . . ."⁴

This attitude, ascribed to the Definitory General of 1631 by the Sacr. Congregation, merits notice because it explains much of the fact, inexplicable otherwise to the student three centuries later, that support of the missions—in sending more missionaries out to Persia, in providing them with funds from Europe, in encouragement and answering their written requests—became from 1630 onwards tepid and even negligible, not continuously, but markedly so at frequent intervals. Apart from opposition to the maintenance of missions in principle, there was, however, a great dislike felt by the Reformed Order to its sons being nominated to prelacies, especially diocesan sees.⁵ As will be read in these annals, more than one of the missionaries in Persia recoiled with horror from nomination to a bishopric, steadily declining to depart, as they conscientiously believed acceptance would be, from the spirit of their Observance and calling.

In this case of 1631–2 several names, some of those of Carmelites, were considered for this nomination: the Procurator put forward that of Fr. Stephen of Pisa, formerly a Calced Carmelite: Fr. Archangelus of Jesus Mary, belonging to the great Genoese family of Spinola and a Definitory General at the time, was also proposed, and on 21.5.1631 the Sacr. Congregation resolved to beg the Pope to make him Bishop of Isfahan; but he was determined not to accept a mitre, and died before long.⁶ Fr. Virgilio Spada, brother of the cardinal of that family, was also strongly recommended, because he would have an income sufficient to endow

¹ There is no confirmation for this remark in letters from the missionaries: they had the Caturri bequest, and otherwise to raise funds locally.

² Perhaps Tatta in Sind and Shiraz are meant: Fr. Epiphanius of S. John Baptist was Visitor General in 1629.

³ *Regesta*, under 13.1633, vol. II, p. 106, mention that the Sac. Cong. de Prop. Fide had asked the Chapter General of the Order to appoint the Convent at Malta as a Seminary for the missionaries to learn Arabic.

⁴ and ⁶ *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 183.

⁵ The *Regesta*, or 'extracts' from the proceedings of the Definitory General of the Order, under 3.1.1630 record:

"Let there be represented to the Pope and to the Sacr. Cong. de Prop. Fide the difficulties which arise over the appointment or assumption of a bishop for Persia and, on the supposition that one is to be appointed, it should be begged and urged that none of ours be appointed . . . on account of the reasons and inconveniences set out. Also, on the supposition that the said bishop is bound to be taken from our Congregation, let there be proposed some of the more learned, senior, fitter and saintlier at present on that mission. . . ."

the bishopric for his successors: he was a good theologian and mathematician and of sterling life, but it was doubtful whether his brother would agree.¹ Finally, in 1632 the Sac. Congregation finished by nominating Fr. John Thaddeus himself: and there had been a petition from Persian Armenians to the Pope to that effect:²

"Most Holy Father,

"The Christians, who are under the rule of the king of Persia and are called 'Franks',³ humbly supplicate Your Holiness to be pleased to give them as soon as possible the bishop desired by the said king with such insistence, and by them awaited with so great desire for the salvation and aid of their souls. Should Your Holiness grant us one in the person of Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Elisaeus, who for 25 years has been a missionary in that empire and so dear and acceptable not only to your 'Frank' petitioners, but also to the king, the notables and all the court and people of that empire, be pleased to commit the examination of his life and merits to the most eminent cardinal of S. Onofrio, so that in the next consistory he may be proposed as 'archbishop' of the metropolitan city of Persia, where is the residence of the royal court, i.e. Isfahan . . . so that, as soon as possible he may be dispatched to his charge. . . ."

It had been observed that "the Armenians who come to Rome even go on their knees to him, such was their esteem for him".⁴ (Indeed, while he was those years in Rome, pressure came from the Carmelite missionaries themselves for his return: e.g. Fr. Matthew of the Cross:⁵

"Be so charitable as to send back to us Fr. Leander and Fr. John, who . . . are the 'pillars' in these parts . . ."

Fr. Basil of S. Francis from Basra:⁶

"We beg your Reverence earnestly for Fr. John Thaddeus, for we are orphans without him and particularly Persia . . ."

and another letter from Isfahan of 1630:⁷

". . . If your Reverence could make Fr. John Thaddeus return, it would be doing a great service to the mission; he is desired by all the Religious and even Muslims, who do not cease to ask when he will come back. . . .")

So, before June 1632,⁸

"in accordance with the order of His Holiness, Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Elisaeus, Discalced Carmelite, was examined⁹ . . . when the replies of the said Fr. John Thaddeus to several questions had been heard,¹⁰ they unanimously gave their opinion that he was suitable for the office of bishop, and, accordingly, should it please His Holiness, he could be promoted to the episcopal dignity. . . ."

The title of 'Tres Ecclesiae'—the three churches of Echmiadzin in Armenia, the seat of

¹ S.R., vol. 209, p. 205.

² *Idem*, p. 206.

³ i.e. Uniat—particularly those of the Latin rite, as in Alingia (Nakhchiwan).

⁴ S.R., vol. 209, pp. 186–7.

⁵ 8.8.1630, O.C.D. 238 a.

⁶ 9.12.1630, O.C.D. 241 g.

⁷ 24.3.1630, S.R., vol. 115, 'Lettere di Levante'.

⁸ *Acta of the Sac. Cong.*, p. 58; see Fr. L. Lemmens, *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*.

⁹ As to his doctrinal and other knowledge being sufficient for the office.

¹⁰ He was examined by Fr. Theodore a Capuchin by instructions of the Cardinal of S. Onofrio, Antonio Barberini, brother of Pope Urban VIII—S.R., vol. 209, p. 201.

the schismatic Katholikos, the stones of which twenty years before Shah 'Abbas had the idea of transporting to Julfa and re-erecting there in order to nail the Armenians to the new Julfa as the centre of the Armenian church too—had been proposed for the new Latin bishop; but it was thought that an Augustinian, given that title by Paul V, was still alive in Portugal¹ (perhaps Fr. Simon Morales?). Isfahan, at any rate, had been a bishopric in the Christian church of pre-Muhammadan days.

Accordingly, in the sitting of the Congregation of 26.6.1632:²

“on the report of Cardinal Spada, the Sacr. Congregation considered that, if it should please His Holiness, in order that the Catholic Faith may be the more easily propagated in the Persian empire, Fr. John Thaddeus of S. Elisaeus, Discalced Carmelite, a missionary since the pontificate of Clement VIII in the said empire, should be promoted to the bishopric of the royal city of Isfahan, in the province of Parthia of the same empire, now called ‘Iraq’”.

On the same day His Holiness

“our lord, approving the opinion of the Sacr. Congregation, confirmed the above-mentioned ‘decree’”.

The Bull of nomination to the bishopric was dated 6.9.1632:³ his consecration followed on 18.9.1632.

In two respects, however, the choice had been recognized in Rome to have drawbacks: Bishop John Thaddeus was already in his 59th year and frail of body for an Eastern climate and conditions: so on the same day as his appointment it had been thought well to assign him a coadjutor with the right of succession in Fr. Timothy Perez, a Spaniard too, born at Palermo, but of the Calced Carmelites. At that date for nearly ten years Baghdad had been in Persian possession, i.e. in the same realm; and, as Capuchin missionaries had already established themselves there, Carmelites had been contemplating similar action, it was decided to give the coadjutor the title of Bishop of Baghdad or Babylon, as can be read in the *Acta* of the session of the Sacr. Congregation, 26.6.1632:⁴

“Deliberating with regard to the nomination of a Bishop of Isfahan, it was considered ‘that, in order to avoid a lengthy vacancy’ (i.e. when Bishop John Thaddeus died) ‘which would be very harmful for that new diocese and for other just reasons, there should be ‘given the said Fr. John Thaddeus as coadjutor, *with future right of succession*, Fr. Timothy ‘Perez, Calced Carmelite, with the title of Baghdad or Babylon’—

which on the same day His Holiness confirmed.

But the limits of jurisdiction of the two bishops were drawn with distinct differences, which deserve notice because of much future argument at intervals in the following hundred years on the subject. The decree of the Sacr. Congregation of 8.11.1632 in the case of the Bishop of Isfahan read:

“... That the Bishop of Isfahan can use the faculties to be granted him in the whole ‘empire of Persia except that part of Assyria now subject to the same king, which is ‘assigned to the Bishop of Baghdad:⁵ also (he can use them) in Greater and Lesser Armenia,

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 189.

² *Acta*, p. 81. See *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, cited above.

³ *Brev. Arch. Vat.*, 966, p. 707. It is given, with some obvious errors by the registrar, in the Appendix of Latin Briefs.

⁴ *Vide* the late Fr. L. Lemmens' *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10.

⁵ Several of the first bishops used the title “Bishop of Babylon”; the decrees of constitution of the see and its limits give preference to the name “Baghdad”—i.e. “Baghdad or Babylon”. Actually the two sites of the ancient Babylon and of Baghdad are far apart.



BISHOP JOHN THADDAEUS OF S. ELISAEUS, O.C.D.
FIRST BISHOP OF ISFAHAN

(From a painting in the Carmelite Convent of S. Anne at Genoa)

"except in the province of Nakhchiwan, which has its own Dominican bishop, and, finally" (he can use them) "in all Georgia . . .",

a vast bishopric, which extended from the Black Sea coast to the head of the Persian Gulf, and across into modern Afghanistan at Kandahar. In the case of the first Bishop of Baghdad the decree of the same date was worded:

" . . . That the Bishop of Baghdad has the right to use the faculties to be granted him "in all Assyria and Mesopotamia, in Basra, Mausil and Amid. But in the kingdom of "Persia he may not" (use them) "except with the permission given in writing of the Bishop "of Isfahan, whose helper" (coadjutor) "he is. . . ."

They had been consecrated together on the 18th September, and on 4.10.1632 a letter was written by Bishop John Thaddeus—the only one known to the compiler to be signed by him 'Bishop of Isfahan'—to the prefect or secretary of the Sacr. Congregation, saying that together with Mgr Perez he would have called, but was prevented by the want of a carriage.¹ At Christmas 1632 Bishop John Thaddeus exercised episcopal functions for the first time, conferring the tonsure on the young professed at the Carmelite convent of La Scala.²

Pope Urban VIII proceeded to explain the position and to commend the new bishops to Shah Safi in a Brief of 9.1.1633:³

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. From what "Fr. John Thaddeus, the Carmelite, has set forth to Us, both from the letters of the king, "Your most glorious grandfather, which he brought to Rome,⁴ and from the very polite "letters of Your Majesty,⁵ which You wrote us after the receipt of Ours sent to Your "grandfather by Fathers Dominic and Matthew,⁶ We plainly perceived with what great "predilection by aiding the Carmelites and Capuchins You are encouraging the Christian "cause, and how much zeal You are showing towards this object when You have promised "that benefits greater day by day shall accrue to them from Your liberality. For this "reason We are prodigiously obliged to You and promise that the remembrance of such "merit will not be erased ever from Our mind by any long lapse of time. This mark of "Your affection for Us and benevolence towards Christians induces Us to see after those "things, which the ordinances of Our most holy religion direct for their use, namely so "that those who have joined the Faith of Christ may not lack a shepherd and governor "to teach them, no less by his example than by his exhortations, piety towards God, "reverence and obedience to princes, kindness, gentleness, honesty towards all, and one "such as will constantly in the Sacrifices he offers implore of the Divine clemency Your "own safety and the prosperity of Your empire.

"For that reason We, following in the footsteps of Christ the Lord and of the apostles, "have raised this Fr. John Thaddeus to the episcopal dignity, that in those matters which "concern the salvation of the soul he may act as governor and director of those in Your "royal city who have already been, and of those who in future shall be enrolled as soldiers "of Christ.

"But, because it is much to be feared lest a man nearly worn out by old age should "soon quit this life, and in order that, if he should cease to live, proper provision be made "for a pastor for the Christians, We have created Father Timotheus, his companion, bishop

¹ S.R., vol. 209, p. 207.

² See MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 7, book 5.

³ S.R., vol. 209, p. 216, and Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, 47, p. 65, No. 73.

⁴ No trace of the originals of these letters of 1628 of Shah 'Abbas, or translations (though they safely arrived) have been observed by the present compiler in the Vatican or Carmelite archives.

⁵ Perhaps the first occasion on which a Pope gave a Shah the style of 'Majesty'—usually it was 'Highness'. Indeed, in the draft of one Brief 'Majesty' was crossed out, and 'Highness' substituted.

⁶ Frs. Dominic of Christ, Matthew of the Cross arrived at Isfahan before the end of December 1628, see the former's letter from the 'Desert of Arabia', 6.12.1628, O.C.D. 237 e.

"of Your city of Baghdad and assigned him to the former as a coadjutor in tending them.¹
 "We send them both to the vast provinces of Your kingdom to accomplish this work, and
 "so commend them to Your protection and care that they could in no wise be recommended
 "with greater earnestness and diligence. Whatever You shall do on their behalf You may
 "certainly consider will be altogether well bestowed, because the episcopal dignity, with
 "which they are honoured, and the virtues, with which they are distinguished, should be

¹ On the same date the Pope wrote also to the Patriarch of the Armenians, archbishop of Julfa and the Vartapet Aristarchus, introducing and recommending the two bishops and laying stress on the union with the Armenian Church effected at the Council of Florence, to the following effect (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 47, p. 67 (53), No. 74)

"Pope Urban VIII to the venerable brethren . . ." (here there is a hole in the manuscript—Moses III, for whom the Brief was perhaps meant, had died in 1632: Philip became Patriarch in 1633), ". . . Patriarch of the Armenians" (another hole in the manuscript) ". . . of Julfa, and to his dear son the Vartapet Aristarchus.

"Venerable brethren and dear sons greeting and the Apostolic blessing With what affection the Roman Pontiffs
 "Our predecessors of old regarded the entire Armenian nation, and with how great zeal they worked for its eternal
 "salvation is not only attested by what they explained to you, Our brethren, about the mutual regard of the holy Pope
 "Silvester and Gregory the Archbishop of Armenia, and the sharing of their counsels; but the examples of very many
 "drawn from the centuries that have passed and gone will also quite clearly show you and these will also be mentioned
 "to you by the bearers of this letter. Still, there is naught that makes this plainer than the agreements of the Armenians
 "with the Roman Church repeated often at different times before now and renewed again, and that one especially,
 "which to the prodigious approval of all nations was established and confirmed at the Council of Florence, when Eugenius
 "IV was Pontiff Of it We possess three memorials, of the genuineness of which there can arise no doubt:—the Bull of
 "Eugenius himself, wherein both the chapters of the agreement are tabulated and all that appertains to it" (two words
 "missing in hole in the manuscript) ". . . are decreed by the authority of . . ." (another hole) "of which . . . carefully
 "copied We have given to these same men who carry this letter to you besides (there is) the explanation of the sacra-
 "ments of the Church for the Armenian bishops and priests completed at the same time, so that in a matter of such great
 "importance they might not be out of harmony with the custom of the Catholic Church . . ." (word missing in a hole)
 "and of the General Council itself, and a copy of that document We send you. Lastly, the story of this agreement was
 "wrought on slabs of bronze-work at Rome on the doors of the Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles by the same Pontiff,
 "wherein are seen to this day the Armenian bishops who for that reason came and met at the Council, with the same
 "manner of countenances (they had), the same clothes which they were wont to wear. This very agreement with your
 "community, as it was established in the Synod of Florence, both the rest of the subsequent Roman Pontiffs as also
 "Clement VIII and Paul V have wished kept unbroken and inviolate. By them finally with the two Carmelite Fathers
 "sent to you they openly testified to the loving kindness of the Apostolic See in fostering your devotion.

"We, following their example, have dispatched to you Dominic, Matthew, Eugenius and Epiphanius, Fathers of
 "the same Order, to assert positively among you that We yield to none of Our predecessors either in goodwill towards
 "the Armenian people or in any endeavour to help it. Since, however, We greatly desire this union and agreement to
 "be ratified by you and, if in the long interval of time it has suffered any damage or change, that it be restored to its
 "former unimpaired observance, in accordance with the opinion of Our venerable brethren the Cardinals We send
 "to you again Fr. John Thaddeus, whom you have the best of reasons for greatly liking, adorned with the episcopal
 "dignity of the royal city of Isfahan; and We add to him Fr. Timothy as a coadjutor to aid him in his enfeebled age,
 "and him too for that reason We have created Bishop of the city of Baghdad. In Our name they will instruct you more
 "fully about the union between the Roman Church and your nation once upon a time entered into at the Council of
 "Florence, and they will show the copy of it for it to be examined very carefully, so that, all points being duly examined
 "and carefully weighed, you may give your assent to the same. Now, even as it is right should be done in other matters,
 "so also in those touching the dogmas of the Christian Faith, and particularly where it is a question of the two natures
 "in Christ, it is allowed to no one to dissent from that, without violation of Catholic truth. For if the witness of holy
 "Scripture, if the unanimity of the Fathers, if the decrees of the Councils, if in fine the true Faith of the Church is what
 "we want to follow, it is necessary to acknowledge two natures in Christ entirely unmixed yet not separable one from
 "the other. This is a point that you will easily grasp from the copy of the Bull, in which each item of what is believed
 "by Us about this matter and what must be believed by all is clearly explained.

"But as touching feast-days and fasts, those points are carefully treated by the book written in your national tongue
 "and published at Rome by order of Gregory XIII, which the same bishops will show you. From it you will learn that
 "Easter has always been celebrated by Us according to the precept of the Nicene Council and by those, who use the old
 "calendar, often at quite another time.

"As to the fact, however, that Armenian monks and traders, who have come to Rome, have complained that they had
 "been ill received, just as was fitting that statement We have suffered with chagrin and vexation, inasmuch as We have
 "always been scrupulous to give instructions for all foreigners to be kindly treated. But We wonder how this could
 "happen when the Armenians are usually received civilly and friendly by Our command in houses which together with
 "a church they have specially set apart for themselves: to this fact John formerly archbishop of Constantinople, to whom
 "everything necessary at the beginning is being supplied by Us, can expressly testify. Wherefore, if information regarding
 "the persons who have done wrong to the Armenians should reach Us, We shall cause them to feel that the former have
 "not been offended and hurt without punishment, and We shall attentively take care that none in the future dare to do
 "such things.

"What We have laid down for the benefit of your race these same bishops will communicate to you verbally and in
 "writing. We more heartily commend them to your protection and care, and beg you to bestow in them all things which
 "you know will be of use for their office, and you shall reckon to contribute to their defence and show their dignity.
 "Moreover We wish you to put faith in what they will in Our name place before you just as if in Ourselves. To your
 "Fraternities We grant the apostolic blessing. Given at S. Peter's, Rome, under the Fisherman's ring, the 9th day of
 "January 1633, in the tenth year of Our Pontificate."

"greatly esteemed by all. We assuredly shall be in Your debt for whatever favours and kindnesses You do them, not otherwise than if these had been conferred on Ourselves. "But We beg that You will grant them most ample letters of protection, which are called "among you 'Farmans', by which they may be able safely to dwell anywhere in Your "dominions and pass to and fro without any risk or inconvenience.

"For the rest, be never reluctant to have confidence in those things which in Our name "they shall publish concerning the unique esteem, with which We regard Your Majesty, "and as to the especial longing for Your eternal salvation which We retain in Our mind. "Just as We shall never cease to solicit from God Your safety, so We have laid an injunction "on both of them to persevere continually with their pious prayers and sacrifice in their "Masses on that behalf: and We added not a few admonitions and, if these are observed, "We trust that they" (the bishops) "will be very submissive to You and of service to Your "empire.

"We ask of You besides that You will give orders, as soon as possible, that the temple, "which Your grandfather had pledged himself that he would build spacious and fine for "the use of Christians in that royal city of Yours, a promise which he had openly confirmed "by a decree of which We have spoken, be erected worthy of Your magnanimity and "Your beneficence. In this matter You will imitate the most famous Cyrus and Darius, "who of olden time wielded the government of that Your very vast empire and who, as is "related in the sacred books of Esdras, liberally furnished the cost, and expenses of priests "and sacrifices, for the building of the Temple at Jerusalem; nor ought You to doubt that "You will receive a very great reward for the merit of having done this from God the "dispenser of all good things.

"Finally, We desire that the Christians who at present inhabit the borders of Your "dominions and those who may do so in after-times be very heartily commended to You: "and We earnestly beg of You that You will afford them Your patronage and shield them "from every harm and molestation, and prevent anyone from being an obstacle to the "functions which they perform according to Christian rites.

"We especially request You, however, to protect Our venerable brother Timothy, Bishop "of Baghdad, with Your royal interest and clemency and by Your authority procure him "the favour of the viceroy in Baghdad, so that supplied" (by the latter) "as expeditiously "as possible with the helpful Farmans of which he" (i.e. Bishop Perez) "will have need "he may be able to dwell everywhere unrestrictedly and attend to the duties of his office "without hindrance from anyone. Should You do all this at Our request, You will have "Us for ever devoted to You on account of so many and such great boons, and We shall "constantly pray God the father of lights to enlighten Your mind with the splendour of "His Divine grace, and that He will bestow on You eternal blessedness in Heaven after "a career of very many years passed happily among mortal men.

"Given at S. Peter's, Rome, the 9th January 1633, the 10th year of Our Pontificate."

On 30.3.1633 also a Bull was issued,¹ addressed to Bishop John Thaddeus, granting him faculties with regard to reserved cases (reconciliation of schismatics, heretics, apostates, etc.), with regard to irregular marriages, the consecration of the Holy Oils, conferment of Holy Orders, conditions for plenary absolution, appointment of vicars, his rights and authority *vis-a-vis* the position of Regular clergy: and also permitting him to make his ten-yearly visit *ad limina* by proxy, and specifying the territorial limits of his diocese. It is not translated at length here, because it does not differ from the usual grant of faculties in the case of bishops *in partibus infidelium*.

While still in Rome on 20.3.1633, Bishop John Thaddeus commissioned the painter, Albertus de' Rossi, to make a painting, 18 by 12 palms² in dimensions, to represent S. Gregory,³

¹ *Vide Jur, Pont.*, vol. I, p. 146, O.C.D.

² A Roman palm equalled about 25 centimetres, making the dimensions some 4½ by 3 metres, O.C.D. 237 m.

³ It is to be remembered that, later, the first church at Basra also had a painting of S. Gregory the Illuminator.

patriarch of Armenia, with Pope Sylvester and king Tiridates of Armenia, at a price of 500 scudi. (It would be of interest to trace that painting, if it was duly executed.) Some time during the late spring or summer of that year the Bishop of Isfahan left Rome for Spain, his intention being to have the books and accessories for the sacred rites¹ sent, for greater facility and, doubtless, more certainty of arrival, in the Portuguese fleet from Lisbon as far as Goa, and perhaps to take ship therein himself.² In order to assist the plans of the new bishop for development—and it has been seen how he regarded large numbers as essential—the Praepositus General of the Carmelites sent off by land in 1633 three recruits from the Order, in Frs. Stephen of Jesus, Columban of the Passion and John of the Cross: the Bishop of Isfahan had secured in Rome three other clerics, besides his own nephew Fr. John of the Annunciation from the Spanish branch of the Order: and in Spain he hoped also to obtain four to six priests in order to form a 'College',³ (doubtless for the Armenians).

While the party was crossing the mountains of Catalonia the mule ridden by Bishop John Thaddeus took fright and bolted, the saddle turned round, bringing the Bishop to the ground, one of his sides striking a rock with considerable force. Taken to a castle near by for the night, and next day to Lerida to be tended by the Carmelites, he expired in that town of internal injuries three days later, 5.9.1633.

To the other and biographical part of this work the reader is referred for an account of the qualities and characteristics which distinguished Bishop John Thaddeus and made him outstanding in the long list of Carmelites who have served in Persia: suffice it to say here that, although he would have been 60 years old, had he reached Persia alive, his loss was—probably—irreparable, for his influence both at the Court and with the Armenians might in the next six years both have consolidated the position of the Christians and brought the Armenians of Persia nearer to, or to actual, union with Rome. Through a strange sequence of events in the choice of successors and coadjutors his death at that juncture, while in Europe, 'put back the clock' in establishing Latin bishops in both Isfahan (for 60 years) and the city of Baghdad (for 100 years).

It appears that he had deposited or left a certain number of effects at Naples, for a question arose as to the ownership thereof, a glimpse of this being seen in the orders of the Sacr. Congregation, dated 13.3.1634,⁴ for letters to be written to Bishop Timothy Perez in Spain:

" . . . 5 . . . For the effects left at Naples by the said deceased Fr. John Thaddeus the "Sacr. Congregation ordered instructions to be written to the Nuncio at Naples to trace "them and place them in a safe place and send an inventory of them to the City, and "also directed that the matter should be taken up with the Treasurer, so that it may be "known whether the above effects are claimed by the Apostolic Chamber according to the "*jus spoli.* . . ."

In one of a number of letters on record, Bishop Perez writing from Madrid, 29.3.1634,⁵ also reported to Rome:

" . . . I have not yet been able to obtain the Brief and papers which Mgr John left: "there has only been recovered through his Eminence Cardinal Monti the pallium" (which was being sent by him) "for the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan: and a small clock which had "remained in pawn for 300 Spanish reals, together with his other effects, which they say "they have sold to pay for the dues to those who carried him to his own country,⁶ and which "were insufficient; but to have that small clock I have paid 96 reals to the coachman: and

¹ and ³ MSS. *Hist. Miss*, chap. 7, book 5, part 3.

² Fr. Dimas, in his letter of 2.11.1634 (*S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 507) mentions: "I have indeed heard from an Armenian, "who had seen him in Genoa and said that the Bishop was awaiting an opportunity to take ship for Spain, in order to "proceed to India by the Portuguese fleet"

⁴ *Vide S.R.*, vol. 104, Lettere di Spagna, Armenia, etc.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 49.

⁶ Was the dead bishop taken to Calahorra for burial, then?

"if it were possible from the money which the late Monsignor had given for the picture of S. Gregory, etc., which remained at Naples, to recover at least the money which I lent him, it would be doing me a great kindness. . . ."

The great picture of S. Gregory the Illuminator may, therefore, never have reached Persia at all. Something else, which did however actually arrive in that country (though too late for the two enthusiasts, in advance of their time, who sponsored its introduction, Shah 'Abbas I and Bishop John Thaddeus) was the printing-press with Arabic characters: it was presumably the first printing machine of any kind ever brought into Persia—an historical fact and date perhaps not without interest to 'literati' and journalists in twentieth-century Iran. It will be recalled by the reader that at the audience of Fr. John Thaddeus¹ in Qazwin in 1618 the Carmelite had

"presented to the king an alphabet in Arabic and acquainted him with the printing of Arabic and Persian letters, about which he ('Abbas I) showed much interest and expressed "a wish to introduce it into his own country,"

and how Fr. John Thaddeus added in his letter:

"that it would be a great advantage to our Religious to have a set of type, and the Shah "has even charged me to procure it",

(a statement confirmed by Pietro della Valle, who termed it an Arabic alphabet printed by Raimondo, with the letters enlarged four times the natural size—see his *Viaggi* under date, 8.5.1619).

That the Arabic type was accordingly obtained by the Order is demonstrated by the final clause of the 'Instructions' from the Praepositus General, Fr. Paul Simon, to the Visitor General, Fr. Eugenius, in 1624:²

"Your Reverence will give notice whether the ship, in which you will sail, will have to touch at Malta . . . so that we shall be able to send there the Arabic printing-type and "other things. . . ."

Evidently, however, its dispatch was delayed until the journey of Frs. Dominic of Christ and Matthew of the Cross in the autumn of 1628; for the former, writing from 'the Desert of Arabia' (six days before reaching Baghdad) on 6.12.1628,³ mentions that:

"It is 47 days today since we left the city of Aleppo. . . . The printing-type, which we "are bringing, costs us a good deal of money, as it is so very heavy, to such an extent that "one camel can hardly bring it. In the middle of the desert, according to what some "friendly persons told us, little was wanting for the printing-press not to go any farther; "because some officials of the 'king of the Arabs' " (i.e. an Arab Shaikh) "came to levy "the dues which the caravans pay him, and at that time they are wont to have a look at "all the loads and merchandise. So, in order that they should not open up our loads "with the printing-type, it was necessary to give them 10 piastres; if they had opened it "and found the lead" (i.e. the leaden letters) "they would have detained it, and even "adjudged that we were carrying war material to the king of Persia, their enemy. So, to "escape that inconvenience, we thought it well to make them some present; and also little "wanted for a book containing the four Evangelists in the Arabic language to be sent to "the Shaikh of those Arabs."

¹ O.C.D. 237 m., letter of 3.1.1619.

² O.C.D. 284 g.

³ *Idem*, 237 c.

That first specimen of a printing-press (for Arabic script) reached Isfahan not later than December 1628–January 1629. The ‘Instructions’ of 1638 to the Visitor General, Fr. Charles of Jesus Mary (O.C.D. 284 g) mention that the information was desired in Rome of

“what has been done with the Arabic and Persian printing-type, sent from Rome to Isfahan—what is to be hoped from it—is any use made of it?”

It is too much, no doubt, to hope that it still survives in some corner of Persia with its old-fashioned script, worthy for the national museum. But the fact remains—the Carmelites were the introducers of the printing of oriental script—or any kind of script—into Iran.

*

*

*

*

*

REIGN OF SHAH SAFI¹ (1629-1642)

FR. DIMAS of the Cross, then Vicar Provincial, began his letter of 18.9.1629² to the Praepositus General in Rome:

"For the present the following brief account of the death of the king, and how his grand-son, formerly called Sām Mirza, son of Safi Mirza, was raised to the throne, will suffice
"Your Reverence:³

" . . . At this time 'Ali Baig, a leading personage and royal official, who was at Farra-habad along with the dead king, was not in Isfahan, but awaited there: and for that reason
"the coronation and proclamation of the new king was delayed for fifteen days.

"On Monday, the 5th February, in the morning Sām Mirza was proclaimed, crowned
"and acknowledged with great and universal delight as king, and by command of Shah
"Abbas the name of his father, Safi, was given him, and he is called Shah Safi.

"The method observed in paying him homage and fealty and recognizing him as king
"was thus: During many days the king mounted a platform (plinth) at the gate of the palace,
"and the most distinguished persons went to kiss his feet: when one of them knelt down,
"the person concerned was held by Khusru Mirza and by — Baig, a leading personage
"and esteemed by the late Shah, after this fashion—the one took hold of the individual by
"the arm, the other by the other arm, and he was not released until he had withdrawn some
"little way. I omit much of the festivities they made of it in the Maidan, especially a
" *Chiraghani*—an illumination⁴ by candles, which lasted for three nights and which, they
"say, cost 3,000 Tumans, which were paid by the Banians⁵ and other traders of the city.

"In recognition of the precautions they had adopted, and the maintenance of public
"order and peace during the interval, when he had not yet been proclaimed, the new king
"gave, besides other rewards, to them both the title of 'Khan', i.e. 'duke', changing also
"the name of Khusru Mirza⁶ and causing him to be called 'Rustam Khan'.

"In the province of Gilan, when the news of the death of Shah 'Abbas became known,
"a man called Gharib Shah" (i.e. the 'stranger' or 'foreigner' king) "rebelled and declared
"himself king; but, after they had fought with him and killed some 2,000 of his men, he
"was taken prisoner by the Persians, and together with the heads of many persons and a
"number of his relatives he was taken to Isfahan and put to death: and the heads were cut
"off and stuck up throughout the city of Isfahan, in order to intimidate the people.

"From all parts of the provinces of Persia there has come, and is still coming, a con-
"tinuous stream of khans, sultans, baigs and other leading persons to pay homage to the
"new king and bring him presents and gifts, according to the position of the donors.

"On the fourth day after the new king had been proclaimed, we too paid our respects
"and presented him with the letter from His Holiness, the Psalms of David in Arabic and
"other unique things, together with some water-melons, and we kissed his robes and after-
"wards gave him an account of the Sovereign Pontiff and of the friendship he had always

¹ The name of this sovereign is indiscriminately spelt *Sufi* and *Safi* by European writers, and particularly European Religious contemporaries resident at his Court and hearing his name constantly pronounced (and there is normally a wide difference between those two 'vowel' sounds), so that it is not easy to know which best to follow here. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th, 10th editions, for instance, in the historical survey uses *Sufi*, the 14th edition with the survey compiled by a new hand, uses *Safi*. The fact remains that his coins in Persian script indicate *Safi*, as they are transliterated by the British Museum Catalogue. ² O.C.D. 237 b.

³ The portion relating to the death of 'Abbas I and the precautions taken in Isfahan has been already quoted and is here omitted.

⁴ The Persian word for 'lighting by lamps', but fireworks may also be included in the meaning

⁵ A term used in India for Hindu moneylenders, traders, etc.: there were a number settled in Isfahan at this period.

⁶ 'Mirza' after the name in modern Persia has been used to designate a prince of the royal blood.

"maintained with the deceased Shah. He gave me back the letter of the Pope for it to be translated into Persian. After a few days we returned again to the king with the translation of the letter, to which he listened, afterwards causing us to be informed by word of mouth of his chief secretary that we should be of good cheer, that we should receive greater favours and kindness than those in the past, and that he would also send a reply to His Holiness. On this occasion he kept us in conversation for about an hour, we sitting in front of the king, while he was all the time looking at us with a kindly eye.

"After some days we presented to the king two petitions, the one for a confirmation of (the tenure) "of the church and houses we have, and of the burial-ground assigned to us many years ago by the Wazir, the other that our Religious might freely go and come in these parts of Persia. Both these were granted to us in more ample form than the deceased Shah had given them.

"On account of the great concourse of people that has gathered and is still collecting daily in Isfahan, there has been and continues to be a great scarcity of foodstuffs. In order to house the people coming it has been necessary for some—even of the magnates of the city—to leave their own houses and go and reside in houses not so commodious. It is our Lord's doing alone which has preserved the two churches, those of the Augustinian Fathers and our own, intact from being profaned.

"*The king has shown himself kindly to all Christians*—familiar even with the Armenians: he has gone many times to the houses of Khwajeh Nazar and other leading men of Julfa to eat in their houses. It is true that they have made and continue to make him substantial gifts of money, and of other things.

"When the king was made Shah he was about 19¹ years of age: of fair height, and dignified presence: his face long, with large eyes, and he is somewhat pitted with smallpox on the face which gives him a certain look: he is rather white in complexion and gives many signs that he should succeed and rule with benignity and prudence. . . .

" . . . The king is leaving Isfahan, and his chief governor, or 'duke', called Rustam Khan, when we visited him (as he is also going with the Shah) has left us a 'farman' to the effect that his officers should give and grant the Fathers whatever they may ask: in these affairs of ours with the Shah it is he who has been our protector. . . ."

Another letter² of the same date, 18.9.1629, but addressed to Fr. John Thaddeus in Rome, signed by both Frs. Dimas and Balthazar, but in Spanish and in the latter's handwriting, adds to the information:

" . . . All the princes and governors in the kingdom came to do homage to, and congratulate the new king. Imam Quli Khan has been here some months and recently he left for Shiraz; although we believe that he should return soon to the king, because by command of the deceased monarch, Shah 'Abbas, he is to manage the government as councillor to the new king for some years. The king for some days has been living in tents outside Isfahan: they have brought the news to us that he is going to Farrahabad. Among the particular confidants of the new king is Khusru Mirza, the former Daruga of Isfahan. They have changed his name, and call him Rustam Khan—it has been conferred on him by the new Shah, because of the tranquillity and high ability with which he governed this city at such a critical time: and it was he who first placed the new sovereign on the throne. The said Khan left today in company with the Shah. . . ."

¹ In a postscript of 1629 to his 'Report on the Mission of the Carmelites in Persia', 1624 (S.R., vol 209), Fr. John Thaddeus stated that Shah Safi was eighteen years of age. He added the curious detail:

"This king has not yet been circumcised, and, when the notables pressed him to be, he made excuses, saying that he was too old and could not bear such great pain.

"He comes of Christian stock, because his grandmother was a Christian, and it is understood that he wants to take to wife the daughter of the king of Georgia . . . the greater part of his armed forces, though renegades, are Georgians and well inclined towards the Christian religion, many of them having in secret been reconciled to it, and practise it. . . ."

² Fr. Dimas, O.C.D 237 b.

In a letter of 20.7.1629¹ the Vicar General mentioned a reply from Shah Safi to the letter from Pope Urban VIII:

"I send your Reverence a copy of the letter which the new king, Shah Safi, writes to the Sovereign Pontiff in reply to one which Fr. Dominic of Christ² brought for the deceased monarch, Shah 'Abbas. The letter in question from the Sovereign Pontiff had been written in the year 1624: and it has been a special providential dispensation of the Lord that it was so much delayed in transit, since it has served very considerably in" (assisting) "the negotiations with the new king for the stablishing³ of this mission and for the confirmation and amplification of the favours and privileges granted us by the late Shah. According to what I have understood, the former Visitor of this mission, Fr. Eugenius of S. Benedict,⁴ should have been the bearer of this letter; but, as it had not been possible to get it ready by the date of his departure from Rome, he did not bring it with him: and I gather that our" (Carmelite) "Fathers, when they came out to the mission at Aleppo, brought it with them and waited for a good opportunity to send it on to Persia. So it will be necessary for your Reverence to give an explanation to His Holiness about these circumstances. . . . When I presented His Holiness' letter to the new king . . . he himself took it into his own hands and, having opened it, handed it back to me so that I should have it translated into Persian and, when it was translated, I returned it to him: and when the king had heard it read, he gave instructions for a reply to be sent to His Holiness and for this reply to be dispatched as urgently as possible. . . ."

The reply from Shah Safi met with almost as much dilatoriness in delivery as that of the last letter from the Pope to Shah 'Abbas, for a new Visitor General, Fr. Epiphanius of S. John Baptist, reached Isfahan on August 17th before Fr. Dimas had sent off his own letter. By the Visitor, when he went south to Shiraz and Basra, it was dispatched, as can be seen from another letter of Fr. Dimas, 18.2.1630:

". . . At the beginning of his reign Shah Safi replied to the Pope . . . telling his secretary also to give us a copy, so that the Persian might be put into Latin. *The original in Persian goes sealed with the royal seal inside a purse of the finest brocade: this the Fr. Visitor carries with him, so that it may come the more surely to the hands of His Holiness. . . .*"

This reply of Shah Safi is next mentioned in a letter, dated 25.12.1631,⁵ addressed from Goa by Fr. Epiphanius, the Visitor, to the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation:

". . . The calamities and miseries caused in the East by hunger, pestilence and wars, which ravage these parts and which continue increasing . . . so that neither letters nor correspondence pass, as they used to pass. . . . Things being thus in suspense, of necessity there has been delayed in Basra for 1½ years a letter from the king of Persia addressed to His Holiness. I am now sending it by sea to Monsignor the Collector of Portugal,⁶ as it has not been able to get through by way of Aleppo. To it are adjoined two translations in Latin, one according to the meaning of the words, another according to the style of the Persian phrases. . . ."

This was the letter from Shah Safi to which Pope Urban VIII made reference in his Brief of 9.1.1633, already translated in this work, which communicated the consecration of Fr. John Thaddeus as Bishop of Isfahan. No trace of the original in Persian—which would have been highly interesting in a series from the Persian kings—has been observed by the present compiler

¹ Fr. Dimas, O.C.D. 237 b.

² He reached Isfahan December 1628.

³ 'Stabilimento' may perhaps apply to the vague title of occupation of the convent—royal property—without rent or contract.

⁴ He left Rome in 1624.

⁵ S.R., vol. 104, p. 299, 'Lettere di Spagna'.

⁶ The representative of the Vatican in Lisbon, performing the office of a nuncio.

in Vatican archives: for the sake of the calligraphy and the brocade purse and seal some dilettante in oriental tongues may have obtained it from the Pope. But there does exist a three-paged Latin purport of it, mentioned by Fr. Epiphanius, in the archives of the Sacra Congregation: and with it also Latin versions—again unfortunately no Persian copies—of the two ‘Farmans’, granted by Shah Safi as reported by Fr. Dimas in his letter of 18.9.1629, the one for the Carmelite Fathers to be allowed freely to come and go in Persia, dated 19.3.1629, i.e. Rajab 1038 A.H., the other of the same date renewing the tenure of the two houses and the graveyard, previously granted by Shah ‘Abbas.¹ Of the latter a re-translation will be found in the other section of this work, dealing with the separate Residences at Isfahan, etc.: and here allusion will only be made to references in it to the former ‘farman’ of Jamadi II, 1027 A.H. (A.D. 1617), ordering the Daruga of Isfahan to provide the ‘Frank’ Fathers with two houses adjacent to one another: to the fresh orders by Shah Safi to the then Daruga to confirm the assignment of the abode to the Discalced Carmelite Fathers

“appertaining to the Majesty of the Pope of Rome, so that they shall now too continue to dwell therein and perform Divine worship, according to their own religion, law and customs, not suffer any violence or oppression or be disturbed by anyone: and that in the burial-ground near the Armenian cemeteries, where up till now they have buried their dead, they may likewise still continue to bury them. . . .”

The ‘Instructions’ of the Definitory General in Rome to the Visitor General, 6.1.1630,² directed that an effort should be made to retain the place granted for burying their dead, and permitted that such Catholic Christians as wished might be buried therein by the Carmelites, and that the place should remain uncultivated; but, whether the Armenians at that time possessed a burial-ground near Isfahan city or the now extensive Christian cemetery near Julfa is intended, there is no means of judging from the documents inspected.

Having begun with a rebellion in Gilan, a province which had enjoyed virtual autonomy till Shah ‘Abbas annexed it, the new reign was hardly less constantly marked by warfare than the last. In 1630 there was not only famine in Persia, but there materialized that attack of the Turkish forces, which Fr. Dominic of Christ in his letter of 6.12.1628 had reported as already gathering with the design of recapturing Baghdad. Before making the principal movement the Turks flooded Persia with raiding detachments and by bribing the Persian commander occupied the important town of Hamadan, only six days’ march from Isfahan. The youthful Shah was unable to raise an army large enough to resist such a widespread invasion. In his *Voyages d’Orient*, Fr. Philip of the Most Holy Trinity, in Persia at that juncture,³ stated:

“It is true that this” (i.e. the capture of Hamadan) “was recognized as due to the treason and treachery of the general of the Persian army, Zain-ul-Abidin Khan: and the Shah, coming to know that Hamadan had been pillaged and almost levelled to the ground, threw himself on his general and killed him with his own hand by a blow from an axe. There is little doubt but that, if the Turkish army had invested Isfahan at this moment, when all was confusion and many had camels ready to escape, they could easily have taken it. But, instead, they lacked the boldness and went on to besiege Baghdad (the walls of which had been almost all broken down), and after 40 days lack of provisions caused the Turkish army to withdraw and raise the siege.”⁴

In his work Fr. Philip refers to the standard Persian method of warfare with the Turks,

¹ S.R., vol. 115 (VI), p. 372, ‘Lettere di Levante’.

² O.C.D. 284 g.

³ Fr. Philip had arrived in Isfahan, 19.8.1629. he left it, 19.5.1630: on pp. 39–40 he wrote:

“Nine months after my arrival in Persia I received orders to leave. At the same time the Grand Signor, desiring to recover the country of Babylon from the Persians, sent a great army . . .,” i.e. the Turkish invasion and advance to Hamadan was about May 1630. He repeats: “It is then very clear, as I have already stated, that it was only because of the perfidy and treason of the general of the Persians that the army of the Turks advanced this time up to Hamadan.”

⁴ *Voyages d’Orient*, chez Antoine Jullieron, Place du Confort, Lyon, 1669.

writing that in the open they were no match for the Turks, but won by ruses and stratagems: perhaps 50,000 strong the Persians would approach to within a day's march of the Turkish force, when they would themselves make off, razing the townships where they camped, burning everything they could not carry away, poisoning the wells. So, when the Turks arrived in pursuit, they were in straits for provisions and water and, finding none, had to retreat in a condition rendering them vulnerable for the Persians to fall on them.

But so critical did the project appear, with the Turks so close at Hamadan, that, fearing lest they should be overwhelmed in the ruin of Isfahan the Carmelites sent away four out of seven Religious: Fr. Philip was himself one, proceeding to Basra in May 1630. During the period of this campaign of the Turks the Capuchin Fathers, then so recently settled at Baghdad, found it prudent to withdraw temporarily to Basra:

“Two Capuchin Fathers, who were in the city of Baghdad, have retired here, and are in ‘this House,’”

wrote Fr. Basil of S. Francis from Basra, 20.2.1630: and that port seems to have been isolated from Baghdad: for he continued:

“Since last March” (1629) “I have been unable to write, and I have been waiting till ‘today for a caravan, which for 6 months now has been every day on the point of leaving. ‘It is true I sent a man last October to Aleppo. . . . The business of the fighting over ‘Baghdad keeps us in suspense, because its final result will be of great importance to this ‘district: we all gather that it should be settled by this summer. . . .’”

Then in August, 24.8.1630, he added:

“In Persia it was said that the army of the Turks had entered Persia, . . . but now it is ‘being rumoured that the army in question is retiring with many losses and to its no small ‘shame. . . .’”

From the records of the East India Company a letter of 17.3.1631¹ refers, no doubt, to the situation as it had been a month or two previously:

“ . . . The king” (Shah Safi) “is att Bagdatt and like there to reside this cuming yeare ‘in exspectacion of the Turkes army returning who hath been shamefully repelled and ‘their siede raised by the Persian, with the loss of 15,000–20,000 of their army”

But the writers continued:

“The Chan of Xiraz is att present uppon an expedecion to take in Balsora” (i.e. Basra) “from the Turke, beseeding itt both by sea and land with an army of 20,000 souldiers, ‘arranged thereunto by the Arrabbs inhabitants or neighbours unto that citty,”

an attack not mentioned by Fr. Basil in his letter three months earlier (9.12.1630): so that the expedition, if it did materialize, must have developed after that date. No letters of Fr. Basil of the years 1631, 1632 survive, while in that of 30.12.1633 his remark that:

“ . . . This land is at present most flourishing: and the concourse of people coming here ‘is great; because it has acquired a great name, and I doubt whether in these regions there ‘be any land so prosperous: and the Pasha only keeps the style of ‘Pasha’, who for the rest ‘is really a very flourishing king”

¹ Edward Haynes, William Gibson at Gāmbnun to the East India Company.

makes it reasonable to assume that the expedition and design of Iman Quli Khan failed again, as they had failed in the winter of 1628.

"This Khan"—to quote a letter of 24.6.1631¹ from Isfahan—"is . . . a prince greatly 'esteemed and of great authority in the whole kingdom, and by commission of the late 'king is to govern with the new king for some years, and does so to the satisfaction of all. 'The new king treats him as if he were his father, and calls him by that name. . . . The 'Khan, or prince, in question has always shown, and still shows himself very kindly and 'benevolent towards us. He has granted us privileges and honours in his jurisdiction, and 'we expect more from him, as they are needed. . . ."

Evidently Imam Quli Khan, with the East India Company's agents instigating, aiding and abetting, or at least sympathizing, had planned yet another expedition for the beginning of 1633, this time against his *bêtes noires*, the Portuguese, in their fortresses at Masqat on the Arabian coast at the entrance of the Gulf: for, 15.3.1633, from "aboard the *Mary*" at Gāmburun William Gibson, John Sharland and Richard Cooper wrote to the president and council of the Company at Surat:

"The project for Muscatt is quite desolved, as also the cheefe instrument, our auntient 'freind, the 'Duke' of Xiraz, and his three sonnes, whoe were by the king's comaund in 'Cosbeene² most miserably executed. . . ."

Of this swift plunge from power into extinction and disappearance from the scene, so closely paralleled in the cases of chief ministers of other Persian sovereigns, e.g. Haji Ibrahim of Shiraz, and later instances, Captain Weddell, writing from Gāmburun to the Company, 14.3.1633, gave details:

"The Cawne of Serash with three of his sonnes are beheaded by the King of Persia and 'his cuntry disposed of to others. Some of his sonnes are escaped to the Arabs. His 'brother (whose revolte to the Georgian was the cause of this tragedie) is now up in armes 'with that people against him. . . . Though it be impertinent to your affaires, yet I cannot 'overslipp some mencion the innocent suffering of the Duke of Serash and the barbarous 'cruelty of the King. The Duke of Serash brother, on a tyme merrily feasting with the 'King, lett fall some overliberall speeches and by the King's comaund was instantly had 'forth and drub'd, as the manner of the cuntry is"—(presumably the *bastinado* is meant)—"with some extremity. Whether mindfull of this injury hee sought revenge or fearing 'the King's further displeasure, he fledd to the Georgian. The Duke his brother labour'd 'his returne and submission and, not effecting it, in his fidelity to the King grew his brother's 'enemy. The King, seemingly satisfied, sent for the Duke and his sonnes to Court. The 'good old man³ in obedience came with his two sonnes foreseeing and prepared for death. 'The King entertaynes him lovingly but after a little tyme, sitting drinking with the 'youngest sonne of the Duke, that lived and was brought up with him at Court, he caused 'the Duke's head with his two sonnes' to be struck off and brought in before him and 'demands of the young gentleman, if hee knew those heads. Hee (deprived of his witts and 'memory by wyne) made answer 'No', and wisht by the King to peruse them more 'advisedly could make no other answer but 'no'. The King then calls for a bowl of wyne 'and casting it on their heads uttered these words 'they dranke wyne while they lived: 'lett them drinke now they are dead,' and so sent forth the sonne to know who they were 'in the next world, or never. . . ."⁴

¹ O.C.D. 236 k., Fr. Balthazar of S. Mary.

² Qazwin.

³ The English Company's agents were prejudiced in favour of Imam Quli Khan because of Hurmuz and other favours done them.

⁴ See *Factory Records* of East India Company, India Office.

Sir W. Foster (*English Factory Records*) in a footnote to the above transcription of the letter of Capt. Weddell, quotes Olearius, who in his *Travels of the Holstein Ambassadors*, translated 1662, p. 361, observed:

"It is stated that Imam Quli Khan's brother, Daud Khan,¹ fearing the intentions of the Shah retired to the dominions of his brother-in-law, Taimuraz Khan of Georgia, and thence sought refuge in Turkey: that Imam Quli Khan, summoned to Court, obeyed, though warned of his danger: and that he was there put to death and 15 of his children killed, one child being carried by its mother to her father in Arabia."

As to the manner of his death—revolting, as it seems to the Western and modern mind—similar instances are given of Shah 'Abbas having guests dispatched, there have been numerous ones in later reigns. Such bloodthirstiness is not (*pace* the *Encyclopaedia Britannica's* vague assertions) a feature of Shah Safi's character: and the substantial motives which outweighed the former services of Imam Quli Khan may have been evidence of high treason and ambition in the family, not only in the case of Daud Khan's revolt. For MSS. *Hist. Miss.* (chap. 18, vol. 4) has a curious allusion to the first-born son of Imam Quli Khan being guilty of ambition and attempting the life of his sovereign and deserving death—"alleged by some to be a son of Shah 'Abbas himself". Briefly, the powerful subject, almost a 'king-maker', had become too powerful: and when a 'Perkin Warbeck' appeared as well, the outcome was inevitable. It may be assumed that before his death Imam Quli Khan had lost influence with Shah Safi, and it is difficult how otherwise to explain that on the one hand the viceroy should be planning an assault on Portuguese headquarters in the Persian Gulf, when on the other, according to a report bearing date 17.3.1631, by Edward Haynes and William Gibson from Gāmburun to the Council of the East Indian Company:

"The Portugall begins to be in favour againe with the Chan of Xiraz, and by capitulacion granted them (the copy whereof translated wee send you) hath licence to trade att Port Counge, which is three daies journey from Gāmburun in the kingdom of Persia, and there hath one half the Customs given him for procurement of trade to that port. . . . The Augustine and Carmelite friars att Spahaun sollicite the Kinge and Chan for Ormours again: and the French Capochine friars are petitioners to contract with the Kinge for all his silkes for ready money for the Frenche Company, to be past by the way of Aleppo: on both theis they have little hope, being strongely oposed by ourselves, the Dutch and Armenian Jullfareyns. . . .";²

and it is a fact that from 1630, or early in 1631, only some eight years after the Portuguese had been dispossessed of Hurmuz by the Persians, the latter assigned the small port of Kung,³ three days' distance overland from Gāmburun, and a few miles east of Lingeh, for a monopoly of imports and exports in Portuguese interests. Of this ten years later, in 1640, Fr. Philip in his *Voyages d'Orient* could write:

"Before we leave Kung, I must mention that this place from very small beginnings, or—to speak more correctly—from a few poor shepherds' huts has become a large town on account of the trade of the Portuguese, Hindus and other nations. . . ."

The English Company itself, however, was also favoured by Shah Safi, for, when in 1726 a list of twenty-two original *raqams* (i.e. decrees or title-deeds) was made at Gāmburun, the

¹ This Daud Khan was the same who had written to his brother recommending the Carmelites when they interviewed the latter at Ab-i-Kurang.

² The first French East India Company was formed in 1604, the second in 1611, the third in 1615: the fourth (at instance of Card. Richelieu) in 1642: the fifth by the minister Colbert in 1644. Jullfareyns = people of Julfa.

³ The Portuguese were in Kung before 1633, when Gaspard de Mello was "General of the Straits of Hurmuz", *vide* S.R., vol. 104, p. 309, 'Lettere di Spagna'.

earliest was dated 1631,¹ when Shah Safi granted them leave to bring their own goods ashore at Gāmburun. (It was not till 1706 that 12 jaribs of land were bought for the construction of a Residency.)

By October 1634 the young Shah had "been far away from Isfahan for the past two years" already, a letter of 30.10.1634 discloses:² and it is evident from a letter of the Vicar Provincial to Pietro della Valle in Rome³ that the revolt of Taimuraz Khan of Georgia was in part the cause:

" . . . News from Georgia you will have from the Theatine Fathers, i.e. how Taimuraz 'Khan fled . . . and how this king' (i.e. Shah Safi) 'entered Georgia. . . .'"⁴

Shah Safi has been painted in black colours by some writers—in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, tenth edition, and subsequently, for instance—and with scathing denunciations:

" . . . His reign was a succession of barbarities, which can only be attributed to an evil 'disposition acted upon by an education not only wanting the *ingenuae artes*, but void of all 'civilizing elements and influences. Taught to read and write, his diversions were to shoot 'with the bow and ride upon an ass. There was a rumour, moreover, that his *father* to 'stunt the possible growth of wit ordered him a daily supply of opium. When left to his 'own devices he became a drunkard and a murderer, and is accused of the death of his 'mother, sister, and favourite queen. . . ."

Though some of it is taken from Fr. du Cerceau's 'History' and prologue to his edition of Fr. Krusinski's *Memoirs* (1740), that sort of denunciation betrays its own uncritical basis. Sam Mirza was three years old when his *father*, Safi Mirza, was put to death: that a daily supply of opium was given to the infant before that age does not read convincingly. Just after the enlightenment of 'Abbas I had been extolled in the work cited, it was surely contradictory to represent the education of his heir as void of all civilizing influences. But the charge loses its sense of proportion when the records of the other Safawi monarchs and from Nadir Shah to Aqa Muhammad Shah, for instance, are investigated: by comparison 'Abbas I was more cruel in his methods of putting people to death. As to the assertion, reproduced in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, that Shah Safi killed his mother, surely the accusation is laid at the wrong door! For this is what the Agents of the East India Company at Gāmburun⁵ reported, 19.10.1648, over six years *after* the death of Shah Safi:

"The 11th instant we had news in this place that the king" (i.e. Shah 'Abbas II) "beinge 'weary of his grandmother's accustomed presumption over him, not considering that he 'was now growne to more maturity, to be freed thereof comands that she . . . should be 'poysoned, which was accordingly put into execution. . . ."

That the young Shah took to drinking was another matter, of which anon. The Carmelite missionaries, his contemporaries, repeatedly praise his affability, and consideration for them: throughout his reign there was no charge of persecution of Christians raised against him, as so constantly there had been against 'Abbas I. As to Tavernier's allusion to the execution of a European, this was admittedly the legal punishment of a homicide. There is no mention in the case of Shah Safi of the moral turpitude, the tyranny of his grandfather.

"From what I understand about this new Shah of Persia, he gives considerably greater

¹ *English Factory Records, 1726-27*, India Office.

² Fr. Dimas, O.C.D. 237 b.

³ Fr. Dimas, *S.R.*, vol. 104 (V), 'Lettere di Spagna'.

⁴ "Taimuraz I, prince of Kakhetia, the eastern third of the disintegrated kingdom of Georgia, having refused to 'surrender Daud Khan, brother of the dead Imam Quli Khan and his own brother-in-law, fled to Imeritia, the western third of the former kingdom. . . ." (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*).

⁵ See Sir W. Foster's *English Factories in India*, 4 vols., 1634-56.

"promise than the last one, showing himself in fact very well disposed towards the Christian religion: and till now he does not exhibit himself so artificial and scheming as his predecessor. . . ."

was the report to Rome of the Visitor General, Fr. Epiphanius, 25.12.1631. That might be qualified as the impression of a Religious with short acquaintance of Persia and when the new reign was only three years old. But Fr. Dimas, Vicar Provincial for some seven years and over twenty years in Persia, should surely not be ignored, as he wrote year after year:

"3.12.36. . . . Our 'patron' " (or 'lord' i.e. the Shah) "is here in Isfahan, where he arrived victorious, and on account of his coming and his (state) entry great celebrations have been held, and more than 20,000 Tumans spent on making an illumination" (*Chiraghani*, the Persian word, is used as today) "and on other things, so that the populace have been spellbound and thrilled, there having never been seen the like in this city. We have seen him twice, though we have not yet"—Fr. Dimas was just back from a visitation of Indian mission posts—"spoken to him, and are awaiting an opportunity to do so. Zaman¹ makes a great show of the 'Frank' tongue: he has visited some of the grandees: and in particular 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, the second person" (in the country) "after the Shah, has said that he intends to summon us, and it may be that he will send us other pupils. . . ."

(The illuminations and celebrations, and the 'victory' mentioned above perhaps refer to the events cited by Archbishop Augustine, O.P. of Nakhchiwan, writing from Warsaw to the Sac. Cong., 23.2.1637 (*S.R.*, vol. 106, p. 293):

". . . As the seven-yearly period for my visit *ad limina* was ending. . . . I was on my way *ad limina*, when there arrived a formidable Turkish army against the king of Persia and invaded Greater Armenia, taking Erivan, the key and fortress of the province, and then *Tabriz* and also many other places, and putting to the sword and fire. . . . In the ruin 6 places in my diocese of Nakhchiwan were involved (Abranar, Karna, etc.) and 335 Christians carried off slaves, among them some priests, two of whom were killed, as well as some novices. The majority of the slaves were re-deemed, some by the king of Persia himself on the recovery of those places.")

"14.1.1637" (to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, Rome). . . . "The affairs of the mission proceed prosperously. This prince is pleased to see us in his dominions: he takes account of us, and has a great opinion of His Holiness. . . ."

"23.1.1637. . . . In Isfahan we have the king, of whom as yet we have not had audience. We have indeed paid visits to many of the most important men of the Court, who have promised us to have us spoken of to the king, who shows himself very kindly disposed towards the 'Franks'. We have seen him on many occasions, and he us. We are having translated into Persian, in order to make him a present of it, a book which deals with good government by princes, because they say he is interested in books; and in matters of morality he is distinctly good, and he is beloved by the people. He has more grandeur than the last Shah: and in his affairs he is fortunate. It is said for certain that an ambassador is coming from the king of Poland, to whom this Shah two years ago sent as ambassador Monsgr the Archbishop of Alingia" (i.e. Nakhchiwan), "Fr. Augustine the Dominican. . . ."

"6.6.1637. . . . The king . . . bestows favours on us, and so do too the greater personages of the Court, many of whom come to see us: and some days ago we went to visit the king and made him a gift of a book in Persian, which deals with good government by princes. He was much obliged to us for it."

"1.1.1638. The king recently has given us a very favourable 'farman', as Persians call it. . . ."

¹ Vide MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 29, book 5: ". . . 1629. Shah Safi sent a noble young Persian youth to be taught 'Italian by the Fathers'—in the end the youth became a convert. As 'Paolo Zaman' he became well known as a painter, after studying in Italy as some claim.

Fr. Dimas died in 1639, and there are few remarks on Shah Safi's own closing years to be observed in letters preserved. But here, from Shiraz, dated 16.2.1640,¹ is a different type of missionary, writing to the Sac. Congregation and praying that he be allowed to go to the Shah and represent to him some of the falsities of the Quran—Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, a Belgian:

“ . . . *This king is of a simple character, very different to his grandfather and predecessor*” (Shah 'Abbas), “*who was very crafty and double-faced. . . .*”

In 1638, of course, came the overwhelming descent on Baghdad of Sultan Murad IV with a great army—the numbers given in MSS. *Hist. Miss.*² are fantastic—over half a million—opposed by 160,000 Persian mounted troops.

‘The latter,’ states the account (no original report by Catholic missionaries has come to notice) ‘did not dare oppose the Turks, who laid siege to the city, 9.11.1638. The Persian garrison numbered 40,000. Many attacks were repulsed with bloodshed. But the walls were breached, and on the fifth day after the breach had been made, i.e. on Christmas Day, after fighting from sunrise till two or three hours before sunset the Turks got into the city and began to butcher those within. Mustafa “Capitan” Pasha, who first had entered to re-plant the Turkish standard on the city, obtained from his master withdrawal of the parole previously promised by the Sultan to some 25,000 survivors of the Persian force, and had them massacred, so that blood ran in torrents in the streets, only some 27 of the principal Persians being kept for his triumph. But the Sultan's troops had lost 40,000 killed in fighting, 20,000 by disease in the short campaign, and another 10,000 were wounded. The city was looted. In a letter sent to Shah Safi Sultan Murad threatened to come and find him, and not by himself alone, in the following year. . . .’

Thus came to an end the fifteen-year possession by the Persians of the famous Mesopotamian city, and with the change of sovereignty the work of Catholic missionaries became much impeded and checked; for, whereas the Persian administration was tolerant of European clerics, Turkish methods allowed of no church, which had not existed prior to Turkish occupation of Mesopotamia.

Like Baghdad, too, in its unquiet existence as a frontier possession, Kandahar was once more lost to Persia in this reign, re-occupied and suzerainty resumed by the Mogul empire of Delhi: it had been “traitorously” surrendered by a governor, whom Shah 'Abbas I had appointed.³ But Shah Safi was not devoid of martial spirit and energy in defending attacks, and he was about to march to regain Kandahar when he died.⁴

Between 1632 and 1634⁵ a Genoese merchant, Giovanni Cavallini, had left the Carmelites of Isfahan the sum of 400 scudi towards the construction of a larger and more ornate church, and by 1638 it was finished. It had four lateral chapels and a campanile with two bells, one of medium size, the other small, which were sounded day and night for the Office. (There were 6 cells “after our fashion with a dormitory: hitherto each one had been at a distance from “the other.”⁶) The Carmelites had been aided in this effort by the arrival of the ambassador from Poland, mentioned above, and, though they had eventually obtained a farman from Shah Safi permitting the erection, the missionaries thought to strengthen their position by asking the king of Poland to become ‘protector’ of this church of theirs. Before starting back for Poland the ambassador pressed for one of the Carmelites to accompany him as chaplain, and Fr. Melchior of the Kings, a native of Arras in Artois, was selected:

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 68.

² Chap. 27, book 5. Wild exaggeration of estimates in figures is habitual still in Persia. One-tenth of the figures here given seems more probable.

³ See *Lettres écrites par le R. P. Bernard de St. Thérèse*, published by Monsieur Leon Miro: letter of October 1642.

⁴ See letter of 17.1.1643 from Gâmburun, *English Factories in India*.

⁵ Fr. Dimas, letter of 14.2.1631 and subsequent letters.

⁶ Fr. Dimas, 31.10.1634.

'When the party reached the confines of Persia and Muscovy, the *Persians* demanded 'duty on all the goods of the ambassador and his suite, despite the fact that he produced 'the Shah's passport granting exemption. The party was suddenly attacked, and, save a 'few, all murdered. Fr. Melchior at the time was some short distance away with a soldier, 'who recommended him to flee; but courageously the Religious dismounted and advancing 'crucifix in hand towards the band was also killed. Taken aback at such treatment of his 'honoured guest, Shah Safi sent troops who cut to pieces the inhabitants of the place 'concerned, without regard to age or sex.'¹

On the other hand, according to the Vicar Provincial of the time, Fr. Dominic of Christ, in a letter of 26.2.1640:²

"Fr. Melchior of the Kings was slaughtered in *Muscovy*, together with the Polish ambassa-
"dor and his suite, by *Muscovites*. . . .";

and this seems the more accurate version (the other being a compilation made in Rome many years later): "slaughtered on the shore of the Caspian Sea"—stated a letter of Fr. Stephen of Jesus.³ The same letter from Fr. Dominic of Christ had explained to the Procurator of the Order in Rome:

"All the Religious in this House are awaiting with the utmost eagerness the letter from
"the king of Poland for the Shah of Persia . . . it will be of no small help for this mission
"in Persia to receive it because this Shah has a very great desire to be on friendly terms with
"the king of Poland and so sets great store on any letters from the latter. . . ."

Partly as a sequel of the tragedy, and in consideration of the life of the chaplain lost, king Ladislas IV warmly took up the protection of the Carmelite missions, and there is said to be a letter from him dated Warsaw 13.3.1641 extant to that effect,⁴ with the result that Shah Safi issued a fresh 'farman', confirming and amplifying the privileges of the Carmelites.

* * * *

* * *

* *

In this reign there can be noted a new orientation of the work of the Carmelites at Isfahan, which became in the course of time so pronounced that in another thirty or forty years the scope of that particular mission-post had been totally altered, its primitive ideals abandoned.

The reader will have observed how the earlier envoys sent by Shah 'Abbas I held out as a *quid pro quo* for material assistance against the Turks a subjecting to the Holy See (by compulsion of the civil power) of all the oriental Christian communities in the Persian dominions: how the Armenian nucleus, transplanted from the region of Erivan in particular, had become thriving commercially but was cut off from its spiritual centre in Echmiadzin under Mt. Ararat: how the Safawi monarch, none too contented with the schismatic patriarch of that time, played with and dangled before the eyes of the Catholic missionaries a notion of his to transport the more venerated parts of the actual buildings at Echmiadzin to Julfa (Isfahan) and to place in charge of one section of a great new church a Latin bishop nominated by the Pope: how on the first arrival of the representatives of the spiritual authority of the Pope the Armenian clergy on the frontier at Ardabil and at Julfa had welcomed them, visited them, invited them to their churches and liturgy, while on their part the pioneer Carmelites, in particular Fr. John

¹ and ⁴ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 38, book 4.

² O.C.D. 237 c.

³ 23.3.1640, O.C.D. 241 p.

Thaddeus, had given greater weight to those sides and aspects of the Armenian doctrines and liturgy favourable to union with Rome than to their errors in dogma. Rome had been asked to sanction—and eventually did sanction—the saying of the Roman Mass in vernacular Armenian, and for it to be said in the schismatic churches. The attitude of Julfa was one of reverence and cordiality. The Carmelites were, in fact, entering on a terrain all too little known in Europe at that period—the tenets and ecclesiastical history of the various oriental Churches. There had been delivery of the Brief from Paul V to the Katholikos Melchisadech by Fr. Redempt in 1613, and a promising discussion of points of difference at Echmiadzin. The Carmelites came only gradually to make distinction between the 'Uniat' or 'Frank' Armenians (who came from Nakhchiwan—Alingia) and the schismatics, or 'Gregorian' Armenians: and in all charity during the persecutions by Shah 'Abbas I encouraged indiscriminately all Armenians to stand fast as Christians in the first place, giving such assistance as was possible. One of the three Papal Briefs issued during the reign of Shah Safi—that of 13.10.1637 (Arch. Vat., *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 51, p. 30, No. 28)—was on behalf of the Armenians of Nakhchiwan (or Alingia, as it was called by the Latins); and, after explaining how from some 300 years previously the Dominicans had been established there, educating and caring for the people, Pope Urban begged for the Shah's special protection over them and for all Christians in his dominions. The Carmelites away in the city had to supervise ministrations to other oriental communities—Syrians, Georgians, Chaldaeans—besides numerous Europeans, and their efforts among Muslims: their appearances in Julfa were as visitors, discreetly, by invitation, or as occasion demanded. For Julfa—it needs to be emphasized—from its inauguration was a township where Armenian subjects of Persia exclusively might reside: no Muslims, but also no foreigner from Europe. It was their Armenian privilege: and right into the twentieth century it was a unit, the gates of which were closed at night.

On the other hand there had been in the first thirty years of the seventeenth century a considerable party among the clergy, who for the sake of the common Christian cause desired doctrinal union with and recognition by Rome accepting, as they did, the Sovereign Pontiff as Head of the Christian Church on earth—in a period when European relations were sought against internal oppression they needed a foreign sovereign Protector;—and at the same time during those thirty years there had grown up a trading community thriving through trade with and in Venice, the Papal States, Leghorn, France, Poland, Spain. As followers of an Oriental rite these traders were regarded somewhat doubtfully in Catholic countries—how far were they to be treated as faithful or as heretics?: so they found introductions and recommendations from Catholic missionaries useful. Both parties, therefore, spiritual and commercial, for the protection of their interests in Europe supported the nomination of Fr. John Thaddeus as a bishop, the foundation of a college for Armenian boys; and freedom to settle and carry on trade in Europe was a simultaneous representation. The Holy See—the Congregation de Propaganda Fide had been founded a score of years later than the original dispatch of the Carmelites with the objective of work among Persian Muslims—was as ever cautious in responding to these overtures from the Armenians, but began to encourage and urge the missionaries on the spot to get the doctrinal realities of the position ascertained. Only in brief quotations from letters can the development of this situation be illustrated: for instance, in 1627, when the convent at Isfahan was in great financial straits:

"This house is at present living on alms: and our Lord is having particular care to provide
 "for it: as, for instance, for these feast-days without my asking for it the Vartapet, or bishop,
 "Khatchatur gave me one Tuman = 16 scudi. . . ."¹

Just a year later, 2.5.1628, the same writer mentioned that he had been

" . . . on Holy Saturday to give Easter greetings to Khwajeh Nazar, and at the Mass in
 "the church of the Vartapet Khatchatur. . . . We have a boy of Khwajeh Nazar at the

¹ Fr. Dimas, 30.5.1627, O.C.D. 237 b.

"house, whom, he says, he has given to become a Religious: in three months he will know
"our tongue. . . ."

On 25.11.1629¹ Fr. Dimas, by then Vicar Provincial, wrote to Cardinal Ludovisi, Prefect of Propaganda:

" . . . Last March I replied to the letter of Your Illustrious² Lordship, informing you
"that when Moses, the new patriarch and Vartapet of the Armenians, who was then shortly
"expected, arrived I should have a discussion with him (as far as you have instructed me to
"do) as regards the points concerning our holy Faith.

"Now that the patriarch has arrived" (in Julfa) "I have several times discussed this
"matter with him and, although he has told me that he does not wish there to be any
"difference between us but only charity, notwithstanding, when I questioned him about
"acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon, he showed himself stubborn in this by reason of
"the hatred this (Armenian) race have for the Emperor Marcian, in the time of whom and
"by whose order, they say, this Council was held, when he imposed this on them, for he
"twice threw the book of the Gospels into the fire and made great slaughter among the
"Armenians. As to the two natures he endorses that we are speaking correctly in saying
"there are two natures: and (claims) that it is the same as they say, when they speak of one
"nature without destruction or annihilation of the other (nature). He adds that they do
"not consider S. Leo a heretic: for that reason I suggested to him that they should remove
"from their book of hymns and other prayers of theirs those words which they say: 'Saint
" 'Dioscurus who excommunicated Leo and his filthy dogma'. Both to that and to other
"points he answered that he would communicate with his other Vartapets on the whole
"question, when he returned to Erivan, where is the patriarchal see, and that he would
"write to me whenever it was time, so that I might be present whenever this business was
"discussed, as by himself he could decide nothing.

"Meanwhile with the opportunity of teaching our language to the Armenian boys we
"are finding a way of instructing them in our holy Catholic Faith and in our customs, and
"we shall go on obtaining those results with the boys which we cannot do with the older
"men. . . ."

To these negotiations the Visitor General, Fr. Epiphanius of S. John Baptist, referred
in a letter of 10.9.1629³ to the Sac. Congregation:

"In execution of the orders given me by your Lordships before I left Rome, directly on
"my arrival in this kingdom of Persia I tried to discuss with the Vartapet Moses,⁴ now
"patriarch of the Armenians, and to represent to him in name of His Holiness and your
"Illustrious Lordships that, should he wish to proceed with this union and conciliation,
"which from both sides we have so much desired, there was wanting nothing else but a
"more explicit confession of the two natures, wills and operations in Christ Jesus our Lord,
"acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon and consent in other various matters of less
"importance, in which they are at variance with our holy Catholic Faith.

¹ S.R., vol. 73, p. 238.

² 'Eminence' as a style of address was made general later.

³ S.R., vol. 115 (VI), 'Lettere di Levante', p. 367.

⁴ As to the Katholikos Moses III (of Tathev), 1629-32, the *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastique*, vol. IV, Paris, 1930, states:

"This Vartapet had been appointed patriarch by 'Abbas I for having taught the royal slaves the art of whitening wax.
"But he had other merits of a higher order. Industrious, a good administrator, he wished to consolidate the relations
"knit again with Rome by his predecessors, and entrusted Piromalli the Dominican with taking his profession of Catholic
"faith to Urban VIII. . . ."

Fr. Philip in his *Voyages*, referring to his own arrival in August 1629, mentioned:

"Some days had scarcely passed when the venerable Patriarch of the Armenians, named Moses, came to pay us a
"visit and express the great joy he felt at our safe arrival. We recognized clearly the real regard he bore us in the course
"of a longish conversation. . . ."

"After a long discussion which ensued on those points he finally concluded by saying "that, as it concerned their religion and on a point which from their ignorance was considered a lapse into the heresy of Nestorius, it seemed to him best to assemble his bishops "and Vartapets in order to discuss more profoundly with them this business, and that, "as far as he was concerned, he would always support the Catholic verdict in all those "difficulties.

"We are now waiting to see whatever our Lord will bring out of this: and on our part "we shall not fail to assist the business in all possible ways. Their (Armenian) Bible, book "of canons, etc., which are those ordinarily used and esteemed among them, according "to what I understand, cannot be had for less than 1,000 scudi, unless by some extraordinary "fortune, which is almost improbable. . . ."

In that year Fr. Philip of the Most Holy Trinity was at the convent in Isfahan, and in his book *Voyages d'Orient*¹ he speaks thus of the Armenian Religious at Julfa:

"It (Julfa) has six or more churches; but there is in particular a monastery of Religious, "who call themselves monks of S. Antony, and who are very like us in their way of life: "for they fast a great deal, observe abstinence from flesh-meat . . . are clothed in a black "mantle of the shape of habit in which S. Antony is depicted. Their cowl ends in a point "behind the head. They wear underneath a vest, or a garment of the same durability: "they have hair-shirts constantly next their skins. On the other hand they do not go bare- "foot: they wear beards: their cells resemble tombs, so small as hardly to take their bodies, "and they sleep on a mat on the ground.

"They are very kindly towards us (i.e. the Carmelites) on account of the similarity "between their Observance and ours, and especially in abstinence from flesh-meat. They "celebrate Mass rarely, but, when they do, it is with great solemnity. . . ."

At this period already the Carmelites were busy fitting themselves by learning Armenian.² But the Definitory General rather hampered relations by regulations made without full appreciation of local conditions. Thus in his 'Instructions' for the missionaries in 1630 the Praepositus General, Fr. Ferdinand of S. Mary, had been strict on many points, including this:

"Our Religious are in no wise to drink in the houses of Armenians or Muslims, should "they have to visit them. . . ."

On this the Vicar Provincial³ wrote to the Praepositus General, 24.6.1631, and explained:

". . . If on some occasions in the year food was eaten outside the house it was in the "convent of certain monks in Julfa, who live more than 3 miles away from our own con- "vent: and this is done to keep up and foster fellowship with those Religious. For both "they and their patriarchs and bishops are very well disposed towards us, making us sub- "stantial alms from time to time: and it is not a month ago since they sent us a mule-load "of flour: and on every occasion, when serious affairs occur, they assist us greatly, always "giving us credit with the Armenians also. We too have always maintained good relations "with them and shown them kindness when they come to visit us: and the whole serves "as a means to their conversion, and to dispose them to it. . . ."

Such were the pleasant, friendly terms between the Gregorian schismatics and Catholic Orders up till 1630, and indeed later. The Vicar Provincial continued:

". . . Eight days ago I received from the Vartapet Moses, Patriarch of the Armenians,

¹ Published 1649, translated in French 1652, vol. II.

² Vide Fr. Melchior of the Kings, 9.10.1634, *S.R.*, vol. 106, p. 280: "I had been learning Armenian for a year."

³ Fr. Dumas of the Cross.

"a letter in which he expresses to me the desire that I should go to Erivan, where the patriarchal church is, one month's journey distant from here, for the gratification of his people there. But we had discussed together such a visit, when the Patriarch was here in Isfahan: and it is with the object of discussing certain points in regard to our holy Faith, in accordance with what his Eminence Cardinal Ludovisi had written to me by instructions of His Holiness and the Sac. Congregation, that I should propose to the patriarch, as I did; but he answered that of himself alone he could change nothing, nor give any ruling without taking counsel of his bishops. However in this respect I shall do nothing more until there arrive from Rome the bishop, who, as the lord Cardinal recently wrote to me, is due to come out to Persia. . . ."

The opportunity for discussion passed unutilized: as has been related, by the will of God the bishop eventually chosen, Fr. John Thaddeus, did not arrive, but died on the road: and before 20.5.1634 Fr. Dimas had written to Rome to say:

"I have already informed you of the death of Moses,¹ Patriarch of the Armenians, who has been succeeded by the Vartapet Philip, who had been demanded and desired by the people. He is not personally known to me, but is said to be young and very virtuous. I have written to congratulate him. . . ."

On 13.8.1636 he reported to the Cardinals of Propaganda that the seven Religious at Isfahan were busy studying languages and

"having intercourse on spiritual matters with the archbishop of the Armenians here, and with the Vartapet Khatchatur, who at present shows himself more friendlily disposed towards us than in the past . . .",

and also in teaching the 'Christian Doctrine' (of Card. Bellarmine) to the Armenians. ("Many Persians come every day, some to receive instruction in our holy Faith with the desire of embracing it. . . .") Next year,² 16.4.1637, he was able to add:

"Some days ago there arrived in this city the Patriarch of the Armenians, who is called Philip, a person of good parts and greatly esteemed by his race. I have visited him, and in due course shall not omit to discuss with him what befits him for his salvation. May it please His Divine majesty to open his mind to grasp the truth. . . ."

With regard to this Katholikos, Philip, MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 17, part 3, calls him "a native of the Pontic Amanus: simple and reasonable . . . with a kindly heart for the Latins. But after the incident in Poland . . . he became alienated from them, and its consequences proved to be untoward and calamitous. . . ."

Possibly it is from that event in Poland,³ and that year, that should be dated a definite change and turn in the attitude of the schismatic Armenians in the East towards the Latins—from charitable concord and fraternal relations to hostility and combativeness which, as this work should show, in subsequent reigns gradually grew to astounding violence, tragically un-Christian. There were doubtless subsidiary factors, and not all the fault need be blamed to the schismatics. In 1639 Fr. Dimas,

¹ This patriarch or Katholikos was distinguished "by his great Christian charity, with which he came to the aid of those in need, giving away with open hands, and very parsimonious as to what he spent on himself. Two hundred of his compatriots may be reckoned as redeemed from Turkish chains and the peril of apostasy through his mediation, and with this object he even pawned the numerous silver crosses of the patriarchal church"—vide MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 17, part 3. He died early in 1633.

² S.R., vol. 106, p. 286.

³ There is a reference in S.R., vol. 413, to an "Armenian tragedy" in a letter from Fr. L. M. Pidou from Leopoli.

"whose tact and knowledge of the Armenian tongue, and sincere interest in all Armenians
 "and all oriental Christians had contributed much to the good understanding died: and
 "he seems to have left no successor. . . ."

To the next reign will be left an account of the development of this important portion of Carmelite interest at the central mission in Isfahan. As to the Residence at Shiraz,

"after the disappearance" (i.e. the killing of Imam Quli Khan early in 1633) "of the prince
 "of that place, who was exceedingly kind to and helped financially the Religious dwelling
 "at that hospice, things have greatly changed, and the Religious suffer considerably for
 "which reason they are little pleased to be there. . . ."¹

"Since the death of the Khan, this town is half-ruined,"² wrote another Carmelite in 1636. From the end of 1631 in fact there had been no priest of the Order there, the Definitory General having ordered the closing of the Residence: only after the Chapter General of 1632 the new Praepositus General urged the reopening, which for want of funds had to remain in abeyance till November 1634. After the reopening the new Vicar, Fr. Ignatius, reported, 19.12.1634:

"There are few Christians in the town, but many of them in some villages near here—
 "Georgians made slaves: and there may also be some Christian Circassians, but I do not
 "know. I hope to see them soon, and learn all . . ."

and, 13.8.1636, from the pen of the Vicar Provincial came the sequel:

"Some time ago Fr. Ignatius went to explore a certain district³ where there are many
 "hamlets of Christians, Circassians by race, 'slaves of the Crown', who for some time past
 "had expressed a desire to be helped spiritually, but out of fear do not dare to have much
 "communication with us. The same can be said of the Georgians who are living scattered
 "in many villages of that province, the poor people keeping in secret to the name of
 "Christians. That would be a (good) work to help those poor souls, as the above-named
 "two Fathers will report to your Eminence in greater detail, desiring that more missionaries
 "be sent to those parts to get to know the language of the inhabitants and go about in the
 "fashion of the country, so as not to be recognized by the Muslims, and thus they might be
 "received by those Christians without fear. . . ."

These were the colonies of Christians so cruelly made slaves of 'Abbas I and transplanted to Fars, deprived of the opportunities of practising their Faith. For reasons not recorded, or from loss of the records concerned, nothing more is known of work among these Christians by Fr. Ignatius and his companions before his departure to Basra in 1641—their distance from Shiraz may well have proved an obstacle—but in 1640 Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, a zealous seeker for souls to save, while temporarily stationed at Shiraz (where he found "no Christian Catholics") wrote to the Sacr. Congregation, 16.2.1640,⁴ with regard to:

"a district called Kamfiruz, three days' journey" (i.e. NW.) "from here, where there are
 "said to be 3,000–4,000 men of Circassian race brought here by the late Shah of Persia
 "about 25–26 years ago. They are obliged to go with the army whenever summoned. He
 "had allowed them liberty to remain in their religion, but *not* to build churches. At first
 "they had priests, but these died off many years ago. . . . I think the best plan to help
 "them would be to take a house among them for so many months. . . . There are some of
 "this race in other parts. At Asupas,⁵ four days' journey from here, 40–50 families: but
 "these many years ago were made Muslims by force, though secretly they keep up their

¹ Fr. Dimas, 2.12.1636, O.C.D. 237 b.

² Fr. Ignatius, 7.11.1636, O.C.D. 238 r.

³ Fr. Dimas, O.C.D. 237 b. This was probably Ramjird district, north-west of Persepolis.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 68.

⁵ In NW. of Fars province.

"affection for Christianity. When I passed by there, the captain was away and most of "the men with the army, but I said to the lieutenant" ('Naib', no doubt), "that I would ask "permission of my superiors to serve and instruct them in the Faith of Christ. He was very "grateful for my offer and said he would consult his people and asked me to stay, but I "had to leave that night. When I passed there it was Lent, and the women were keeping "it and showing great dislike at having been forced to become Muslims. . . ."

Although it happened several years after the end of Shah Safi's reign, here may best be included a mention of a later journey of the same Fr. Dionysius to investigate what Christianity survived in that part of Fars:¹

'On 17.6.1649 he left Isfahan, accompanying the new Vicar Provincial, Fr. Dominic of 'S. Nicolas, who was proceeding to India, on part of the journey. They travelled together 'as far as the village of Mayin' (which lies to the north of the great plain of Ramjird). 'Thence Fr. Dionysius made his way twelve miles to Durudzan in the district of Ramjird: 'it was then also called Chirkisabad, from the Circassian inhabitants: there had been many 'families in the past, but in 1649 Fr. Dionysius found that only the name remained—all 'had been carried off by an epidemic except two persons: and the Persians said it was a 'punishment because the Circassians (Christians) had shot hares and drunk wine in a shady 'place, where there was a shrine of 'Ali. (Perhaps Imamzadeh Isma'il was meant by the 'Carmelite.) 'Similarly at Deh Shaikh, where there used to be many families, only one old 'man with seven or eight Circassian and Georgian women remained. For thirty years 'they had all been renegades in that district, it appeared: they did not despair of becoming 'Christians again but feared they might then be killed by the miscreants infesting that 'district' (as they did still in the first quarter of the twentieth century). 'One woman 'said that she clung to the faith of Christ. In the evening Fr. Dionysius climbed the pass 'to Dashtak, where he found to his sorrow that all the Circassians had been marched off 'to Kandahar' (in Afghanistan now) 'to swell the Shah's forces for the siege. Crossing the 'mountain range into the district of Chahar Nahieh, the adventurous missionary, after 'losing his way and clambering with his hands and feet over stones, came down after 'nightfall to Malikabad and went on before daybreak to Palangiri, then the chief village 'of the district. Here, 1st July, a poor man with a mare took him across the river on its 'back: except for baptizing three dying infants he did nothing here: all he found were three 'old Circassians, and they and their women would not listen to his exhortations to return 'to Christianity. He learnt that in the Circassian villages, Adamabad, where there had been '49 families, Mashhad, Ramuzabad [*sic*] which had 20 to 25 families in each, all the men 'were away at the war, while the women were keeping the Christian fasts and cursing those 'who had transported them there from the Caucasus. There were 20 families of Circassians 'at Khusruzar (? *sic* for Kushk-i-Zard) and others at Darabjird. The position was so 'unpromising that Fr. Dionysius turned back to Nizamabad, a Persian village where he 'was well treated, and thence marched with a caravan taking rice for their overlord to 'Isfahan, via Khusru Shirin to Yazdikhvast, where he chanced on an Englishman, who 'was kind enough to take him back to Isfahan. . . .'

The preceding recital will be further evidence of the widespread hurt inflicted by Shah 'Abbas I with his cruel deportations *en masse* from the Caucasus of Christians, whom he had 'enslaved'. It will also be a surprise perhaps to owners of villages in the districts concerned to-day to learn that Caucasians formerly inhabited them and farmed there: and it is conceivable that it may still be possible to observe traces of a different race in the types.

* * * * *

¹ O.C.D. 235 d., a report attached to a letter of Fr. Stephen, 18.11.1650.

It will be convenient at this point to recount the work of the Carmelites at another mission—Basra—with yet another race and religion extraneous to the local ones: the Mandaeans (as they are correctly designated), vulgarly and wrongly called Subba¹ by the Muslim Arabs, i.e. Sabaeans, while romantically, but mistakenly, they have been known to Europeans as 'Christians of S. John Baptist'.

Recent residents in and visitors to Mesopotamia ('Iraq) will know of them at Basra, at 'Amara, in the Muntafiq district, at Suq-ush-Shuyukh, Garimat Bani Sa'id, Chubayieh (after the British occupation a few settled in Baghdad, while they are also at Muhammareh and Ahwaz, in Persian territory) as a handful of expert silversmiths, working in a black enamel² design on silverware of handsome finish. To the earliest Catholic missionaries, i.e. at the beginning of the 1600's this race was by way of an unknown phenomenon: they were misled by and wrongly followed the scent of the appellation 'John', which in the course of time had been magnified into 'John Baptist', and so to 'Christians of S. John Baptist', on the analogy of the 'Christians of S. Thomas' on the Malabar coast. Their observations on the rites and customs and creed and sacred books of the Mandaeans read crudely today. Modern scientific decyphering of their language and sacred writings has advanced down to Mrs. E. S. Drowers's learned monographs on Mandaean writings and *Black and White Magic of the Mandaeans*, published in 1934 by the British School of Archaeology in 'Iraq, and *Folklore*, 1933, respectively. Mrs. Drower may be quoted:

"Their religion is not Christian and not Muslim and not Jewish, but a most curious 'religion of their own, in which Jewish, old Persian, Babylonian, and what appear to be 'early Christian elements are blended into a *pagan* whole. They have kept themselves 'free from admixture with other races by severe prohibitions. . . . They have their own 'language, first cousin to Aramaic and Syriac—their own script. . . . According to the 'latest census they number only 4,800 souls. They were once numerous. Groups of them 'are found in the larger cities of 'Iraq, but they are most numerous in the marsh villages of 'Iraq, and there are also communities of them . . . along the banks of the Karun . . ." (i.e. the river which flows from Persia into the Shatt-ul-'Arab).

To the learned and instructed the ideas the Carmelites formed about the Mandaeans, their efforts to find a Christian nexus in the Mandaean rites and to rectify their 'errors' will be tedious reading; but the scientists will probably be surprised to learn of the phase (of some twenty-five years' duration) in the history of this community described briefly below. It is possible, too, that some of the customs and antipathies of the Mandaeans three centuries ago differed from those of today.

The first letter, extant, of Fr. Basil of S. Francis (17.2.1624) which mentions them, informs the Sac. Congregation regarding these 'Christians of S. John', than whom he had not previously met Christians more widely separated (i.e. from Western practice), seeing that they celebrated no sacraments:

"They mix little with me and other Europeans in Basra, because the 'Franks' eat meat 'of animals killed by Muslims: and above all else these so-called 'Christians of S. John' 'abominate anything cooked by black slaves, who, they say, are not sons of Adam: they 'also say that anyone circumcised, whether Muslim or Jew, cannot enter their religion: 'and that they may not wear anything blue, nor say prayers (turned) towards the 'West. . . ."

Cardinal Ludovisi, Prefect of Propaganda, had evidently instructed Fr. Basil to give a more

¹ The root word referring to their ceremonial 'washings'.

² According to the 'little Arabic book' mentioned by Saiyid Muhammad Ahmad in his MSS., this black enamel is prepared from 10 parts brass, 8 parts copper, 3 parts silver, 21 parts sulphur. The silver and brass being melted, copper is added, sulphur being gradually mixed and pounded in a mortar, and worked up with water and lime for setting in the design to be executed on the silverware.

detailed report: and the latter's reply of 29.4.1627 begins by explaining that he had been awaiting the arrival of the Vicar Provincial in order to set out for the town of Hawaizeh in Persian Khuzistan, where the 'Christians of S. John' had a larger centre than Basra

"and practise their ceremonies, and their great Shaikhs reside.

"Firstly. This race, named by us 'Christians of S. John' and among the Muslims 'Subba', among themselves and in their own tongue is called 'Mandaea'. Their own language is Chaldaean, but corrupt or, indeed, just as Italian and Spanish are different tongues, and Castilian and Portuguese, so it may be with this one: I have caused real Chaldaeans to converse with these 'Christians of S. John', and they understood very little of one another: the characters somewhat resemble Chaldaean, but are different, and the names of the letters very different.

"The real Chaldaean . . . which we call vulgarly Syriac, with the characters of which I have some moderate acquaintance because of the constant need we have, when dealing with Christians here, seeing that with regard to Muslim Arabs, whose writing they do not understand, they employ the Arabic language but written in Chaldaean characters:¹ and they call this Gerkhuni" [*? sic*].

"These 'Christians of S. John' have a tradition that their own country lies towards Syria and Jerusalem, and they denominate it Jabal Akhdar, which signifies the green mountains, and they assert that still today some of the Mandaeans are dwelling there. . . ."

As to the allegations of previous travellers that this folk were Christians Fr. Basil was under no illusion and explained:

"For a long time past I have come to the conclusion that they have no" (Christian) baptism and consequently no sacrament: and I have tested this by talking with their priests and eliciting with great care the words they say when they perform that ceremony, which is nothing more than an ablution, a customary business in these parts. I have seen them baptize without any mode or form: and it was that which made me doubt first. . . . In Goa they" (i.e. the Portuguese, etc.) "baptize as many of them as go to those parts, as everybody, generally speaking, regards their 'Christian' status with suspicion. . . . But, as now indeed it seems to me they are not Christians . . . I think they may be sprung of Christian ancestors . . . and they may have derived the name from such: they observe Sunday: they venerate the Cross. . . ."

What is historically important is a list of villages and townships the Mandaeans inhabited in 1625:

"They possess no country of their own, but live scattered in the surroundings under the dominion of the Muslims, partly those of the Shah, partly those of the Pasha of Basra. The place, where they are most in numbers . . . is Hawaizeh: the other places where they reside are the following" (the spelling of the names by the ear of Fr. Basil makes them often unrecognizable, or hardly so):

"Basra	Mishki
"Muhassanieh [<i>? sic</i> , Muhaisin, or Muhammareh]	Khairabad
"Kamalabad	Ja'farabad
"Seeitte [<i>? sic</i>]	Gasbian [<i>? sic</i>]
"Shatt-i-Jadid	Balangun [<i>? sic</i>]
"Gessari [<i>? sic</i> , Hisari]	Dilunak
"Buyani [<i>? sic</i>]	Mansurabad

¹ Just as the Jews of Salonica write and print Spanish in Hebrew characters.

"Migebal [? sic]		Sharafabad
"Khushnamieh [? sic]		Ma'inabad [? sic]
"Dizful	Ramhurmuz	
"Shushtar	Durakh	Ch'aab (or Shiub?)
"Jizair	Aqa Zakieh	Khalafabad
		Hindijan"

and, strangely enough, "Bihbihan" and "Dihdasht"—so far inland in tribal Persia.

"There should be some others,¹ but all save Basra are places of small importance.

"One of their chief priests got out the number of households for me, and says that 'they are round about 1,200; but I doubt whether they be so many. Among them they 'have no other police, or government, than that of the Muslims, to whose laws they are 'subject. . . .

"As to the spiritual side, the ceremonies of their creed, they have some chief priests whom 'they call 'Ganzeur', and there are at present three—Shaikh Begtier [? sic, for 'Bakhtiar'): 'Shaikh Bahram: Shaikh Hija, all in Hawaizeh: these are, as it were, with us, 'bishops' 'because it falls to them to do all the important acts . . . they have other, simple priests, 'whom they call Talamidi. . . .

" . . . Among their most common customs . . . I may mention here what they observe 'with the greatest strictness, and in which they show themselves most tenacious, is not to 'eat the flesh of animals killed by Muslims, nor even by us (though not with such rigour): 'nor even will they eat other foodstuffs of the Muslims unless simple ones, such as produce 'of the soil, e.g. fruit and such things. If any one of them were to eat such meat, killed by 'the hand of a Muslim, *ipso facto* he is considered a pervert. . . . They do not wear 'anything of a blue colour, even it be as much as a straw. Their priests never cut a single 'hair, whether of their heads or their beards: the common people shave their heads, as do 'the Muslims, but, like the priests, they may not cut a single hair of their beards. Usually 'and generally they are married to a single wife, but they hold among themselves that 'more than one can be (espoused): and the reason they adduce for this is that there are 'many women, but few men: and in that respect it is preferable that a man should take two 'wives rather than be the cause for a Mandaean woman to take a Muslim husband and 'become herself a Muslim. They consider it a bad thing to pray turned towards the West. 'With them prayer in Arabic is excommunicated, and not even with goodwill are they 'willing to expound a book of theirs in the Arabic tongue, as has happened to me. . . . 'They have a book called *Sidra*, by which they govern themselves, and they say that it is 'very ancient. . . . They deem it unlawful to turn Christian, Muslim or Jew: this is the 'popular idea, but one of their chief priests (two of them have been to Basra) said that, as 'they could not do this out of fear of the Muslims, out of that cause sprang this erroneous 'opinion. Big and small, all Mandaean hold that the negroes are not the offspring of 'Adam and Eve, but of Noah and a sprite or hobgoblin, and for that reason ought not to 'be baptized, nor should anything be eaten from their hands. . . . All those residing in 'Basra follow one of three crafts—goldsmiths, carpenters, or smiths: they do not practise 'any other except it be agriculture, where there is the opening: for the most part they are 'very poor and held in little esteem, not only by Muslims but by all the (other) Christians, 'among whom the name of 'Subba' is a subject for ridicule. With all this they deem 'themselves of greater purity, probity and rectitude than any other, and naturally maintain 'a great pride of race, and for this reason they never mix with any other kind of people ' . . . few of them become Muslims. . . . From what has been said the Sacr. Congregation 'will easily be able to infer what the state of this race is, and that really on our side we ought 'to do something for their welfare, since the Lord has led us to these parts, where we see 'them and have dealings with them: and, although for the present to human eyes a remedy 'appears so difficult, to the Lord who governs all it may be very easy. . . ."

¹ Fr. Basil's list is limited almost entirely to Persian territory and does not go up the Tigris to 'Amara, or the Euphrates.

The Mandaeans in Basra district presumably were harshly treated by the Arabs [Fr. Basil, 26.2.1628, "these men are so afeared of the Arabs . . ."] that in another letter of the same date he is writing to Cardinal Ludovisi, putting forward a project for their relief, viz. their own wish to be given land for settlement elsewhere:

"The letter of your Illustrious Lordship, dated Rome 26.2.1627, caused the greatest "pleasure to the hearts of these poor Christians" (i.e. of S. John) "who have been very "delighted to be told that a letter had come from Rome in the name of the Pope remem- "bering them and desiring to know the state of their affairs: it seems to these poor men "(on account of the oppression under which they live) that it is a heaven-sent gift—as indeed "it is—that such a personage should have thought for them. It appears to them a good "channel to attain an *aspiration which they have had for long past*, and exhibit a great desire to "realize, i.e. that His Holiness *should give instructions to the king of Spain to give them some "one of the places he possesses in this Persian Gulf*, in order that they may live there with greater "freedom, without being under the yoke of the Muslim Arabs—a business on which I have "not reported hitherto and do not report at present to your Illust. Lordship, because I am "keeping it back, waiting for certain results and details; and both on this and other matters "I shall keep in mind to inform your Lordship more minutely . . . and before doing so "I greatly desire to go to Hawaizeh, on which place much depends for the information "to be more complete. . . .

"As to your Illust. Lordship recommending me to try and win back the 'Christians' "to the obedience of the See of Rome . . . what I did three years ago . . . was only in "regard to the Armenians, Syrians and other Christians, because something else than "obedience is required in the case of the 'Christians of S. John'. . . ."

On that the following instructions were issued to Fr. Basil from Rome¹ by Cardinal Bandini in July 1629:

"As the business of the 'Christians of S. John' proposed by your Reverence has appeared "very serious to the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide, and as the latter has been "unable to take the decision that behoved it from lack of sufficient information, the Sacr. "Congregation desires that, after having used all the diligence that so important a matter "deserves, your Reverence will signify what you gather with regard to the following points:

"*First*, the Sacr. Congregation desires to know the number of souls among the 'Christians " 'of S. John' who would desire to leave and place themselves under the jurisdiction of "the king of Spain,

"*Second*, in what province of the king of Spain would they be willing to go; because, if "they would care to retire to the East Indies, the business might perhaps not be so difficult. "But, should they want to come to Europe, there would be signal obstacles on all hands, "as your Reverence can understand on considering the length of the journey, the risks "in bringing so many people, and the princes through whose dominions they would have "to pass.

"*Last*, if these 'Christians' wish to enter India, whether they will decide to profess the "Catholic Faith and the Latin rite. . . . Therefore your Reverence should write a full "report with regard to those points, so that subsequently the matter may be discussed "with the Catholic king (i.e. of Spain), and these 'Christians' may be aided with all the "good offices possible. . . ."

Fr. Basil of S. Francis, 22.2.1630,² acknowledged receipt of those instructions and answered:

"*First*, I have made careful reckoning and found that this community altogether will be "about 2,000 souls³—not more, less probably: and I have had talks with a large part of

¹ S.R., vol. 115 (V), 'Lettere di Levante', p. 412.

² S.R. vol. 115 (V), p. 415.

³ This figure must refer to the district round Basra only.

"them, and in all of them I have found this desire" (i.e. to leave Basra district): "and I am sure that all have it, and I do not wonder, because by this means they think they will be able to escape from being slaves, and have the liberty they wish . . . and this is their principal object.

"Second, There is a country not far from here called *Bahrain*, which had been in the possession of the Portuguese, and now the Persian holds it; but at present the Portuguese are talking a great deal about retaking it. Should this come to pass, that land is what the men here desire; but so long as it is doubtful, there is another, not very distant in Arabia, called Dubba,¹ which not long since was taken by the Portuguese. It has water, palm-trees, and crops can be sowed (which is what they most want). That these people should go to our countries in Europe never entered my mind, nor these people's. . . .

"Third, It seems to me that, once they were among us" (i.e. the Portuguese) "and had taken root under our rule, this" (i.e. conversion to the Catholic Faith) "would be a very easy matter. . . . Ordinarily they tell me that, once they are (living) among us, they would do whatever we bid them. If, perchance, complete satisfaction should not be obtained over the present persons, their children remaining under our teaching and in our countries would soon forget their ceremonies, especially as their priests would soon come to an end, for there are few of them, and no new ones would be made. . . .

"Before I wrote this letter to the Sacr. Congregation, in order to do so on a surer basis, I summoned to this Residence the chief men of their community and showed them the letter regarding their business and explained the points in it and the desire to help them. They expressed gratitude and at once talked about wanting to send one or two (of themselves) with the reply" (i.e. to Rome) "to express it the more clearly. . . . But the most essential difficulties . . . which now occur to me are:

"(a), which I put in first place—the inconstancy of these people, and the small credit one can give to their words. . . .

"(b) to put any intention of their own into execution is very difficult, because on the one hand many have wives, children and other impediments, . . . on the other, when this project is learnt by the Pasha and the other magnates under whose control they live, when they see them deserting their lands, they" (the Pasha, etc.) "will do a great deal of harm to the others who remain here, not only in order to hinder them from going, but, what is worse, on account of those who have already run away . . . and so it might result in hurt for the innocent. . . . It would be best if the Pasha would be willing to give them liberty to go in such respect; but as the country draws no small benefit from this community, who serve the Muslim Arabs in every way, I much doubt whether it could be obtained. Another difficulty is the method how they are to leave, for it is not so easy to find ships: and for that reason, if the business takes effect, it would be well for the Portuguese, who come here, to have instructions to carry away those who should want to go: and they (the Portuguese) can do this very conveniently.

"I do not think it should come ill to the king of Spain to have these people in his dominions, because, apart from the service he would be rendering God, they are very good men for soldiers, of whom there is such dearth here, that the *very Muslim Arabs use them to make war on (other) Muslim Arabs.*² It will be some four months ago that I sent off to

¹ Duba, usually spelt Doba on maps, is NW. of Suhar on the coast of 'Uman, in the territory of the Sultan of Masqat and 'Uman (though one quarter is under a local Shaikh), and due E. of Sharja.

² In connection with the operations of war of the Pasha of Basra, it is interesting to note here two cases in which Fr. Basil's assistance was invoked and which because of the prohibitions in the 'Bulla Coenae' he thought well to refer to Rome. (a) 20.2.1630. The Pasha wished to have from India at least 1,000 bamboo canes for making lances, and asked for a licence. It was not a case, remarked Fr. Basil, of prohibiting them as they might be used against Christians, for at this juncture the point was to defend Basra against the Persians, and the Portuguese were aiding the Pasha with their ships. The Sacr. Cong. in its reply (S.R., vol. 115, p. 419) pointed out that the Bull in question excommunicated those who supplied weapons for use against Christians. (b) 26.2.1628. *Tutunaya* (antimony) and *Qal'a* (block tin) were metals that had always been shipped from India, where the Portuguese were so strict but had never stopped these metals, which were not used for making arms, but by silversmiths, as pigments, for tinning vessels. The Fathers at Isfahan were raising unnecessary scruples, he thought.

"Masqat in a vessel 10 or 12 of these men, who begged me with much earnestness to do so, "in order that they might escape the hardships they were suffering: and there went with "them one old man to explore and see what can be done there and can be planned for the "better.

"I turn back to represent to your Illust. Lordship that, if by this method these men are "not converted, no more thought need be wasted on them; nor in Muhammadan countries "will they be ever anything else than they have been up till now. Time will be our main "witness to this: and as to this business Your Illust. Lordships will please understand that "it is not a question of bringing back Christians" (i.e. to the Faith from error), "but of converting "them from real paganism. . . .

" . . . The book that today they follow they call *Sidra*, and they say it has come from our "father Adam . . . and this book it is much desired to have translated into Arabic: and "now that I understand that Your Illust. Lordships also want it, I desire the more to get "hold of it. But they (the Mandaean) say that it is a grave sin to translate it, and besides "there are very few who know how to read its writing, let alone make a translation of "it . . . in all this country there are only two old men who know it, and they are not "suited for this. . . ."

In a second letter of 26.2.1630¹ Fr. Basil added:

"After I had closed the letter which I send to the Sacr. Congregation, the 'Christians "of S. John' have brought me the enclosed packet for His Holiness, and it is in gratitude for "what they understood from the letter I have just received from the late Cardinal Bandini. ". . . I shall also mention that today there arrived a letter from those 'Christians of S. "John', whom I sent to Masqat: and they express themselves well satisfied with the land, "which I indicated in my other letter, and they find it good and want to have it and ask for "it with all earnestness: and that place is called Dubba."

In the archives consulted a gap then occurs with regard to this subject, but evidently the machinery indicated by him was brought into play: for, 2.12.1633,² from Basra Fr. Basil notified the Praepositus General in Rome:

" . . . With regard to the 'Christians of S. John', I wrote at length to your Reverence "and to the Sacr. Congregation several times: how *last October*" (i.e. 1632) "I sent to our" (i.e. Portuguese) "possessions in the Straits of Hurmuz a matter of 700 souls of both sexes, "and of all sorts, all of them full of courage, there being (humanly speaking) no other method "of converting these people except this; because, should they take to the place, little by "little all will emigrate.

"As regards their journey expenses, I gave them *by orders of the Viceroy of India* 1,200 "piastres, so that they left contentedly. But, just as this year everything has gone amiss, so "it occurred too that these people found General Ruy Freire d'Andrade (to whom they "were going) dead, and with that they were split up and sent (in groups) to various forts of "ours, little to their liking and many of them left. Some of them went to India to see the "Viceroy,³ and so far I do not know what success they have had—in any case he will have "given each of them his rations. But things are at a bad pass, because those who have so "far remained are scattered and with reason very disgusted. . . . Will your Reverence "please see to this business and discuss it with the Sacr. Congregation, so that, before all" (the Mandaean) "there have been wiped out, some orders may come from the king of "Spain recommending these people" (to the Viceroy), "and, if these orders can be obtained,

¹ S.R., vol. 115 (V), p. 420.

² O.C.D. 241 g.

³ In 1630 the Conde de Lineros [*? sic*] was viceroy of the Portuguese Indies, very helpful to the Carmelites. There is a letter from him to the Card. Prefect of Propaganda in S.R., vol. 135, p. 345, speaking of Fr. Basil being actively engaged in sending Mandaean to India.

"will your Reverence please have them sent to the Superior of our mission so that personally he can go and help and comfort these people? Let the order be firstly for them to be helped financially . . ."

Apart from the death of the noted Ruy Freire d'Andrade, evidently a prime mover in this scheme for their settlement, the reason for the collapse of the proposal in regard to Duba is given by Fr. Basil a year later, 15.11.1634,¹ in a letter to the Sacr. Congregation:

"The Viceroy gave" (the Mandaeans) "the land for which they asked, at Dubba in Arabia in the Straits of Hurmuz; but when they arrived they found it occupied by Arabs except the fort, which was of no use to them, as they wanted to till land and live by it. So they remained in Masqat, and many returned to Basra. . . ."

Almost simultaneously with the suggestion by Fr. Basil that the Superior of the Carmelite missions should go to the 'spiritual help' of the Mandaean emigrants stranded on the Arabian coast, the Visitor General, Fr. Epiphanius of S. John Baptist, still in Goa, had taken action:

"The Prior of Goa wrote me² that the Visitor had in mind to found a Residence on the Straits of Masqat at a place called Duba, taken by the Portuguese a few years ago from certain Arabs, and to colonize it with the Sabaeans, whom Fr. Basil sent to India.

"I do not know whether it would be an advantage to us, particularly because the Arabs are always fighting the Portuguese, and already in those parts the Arabs have recaptured many things and lands which the Portuguese had seized from them" (20.5.1634).

There was justification for the scepticism of the Vicar Provincial: and the sequel to this is to be read in a letter of Fr. Eustace from Isfahan, 26.9.1634:³

"Last December" (1633) "I arrived in Masqat in company with the head man of the 'Christians of S. John' and the other Mandaeans who had gone with him to Goa, in order to take possession of the concession granted them by the Viceroy, i.e. lands sufficient for them to settle, and to transfer the rest of their race, which is scattered in Basra and elsewhere, as they had undertaken to do. The lands in question are on the seashore of the strait of Hurmuz, the chief place being called Duba, together with four or five other small ones. I was sent by the Visitor General to found a convent at Duba and stay and tend those 'Christians' in our Catholic Faith and little by little to purge them of their errors, which are not few, as far as I could see in the short time I passed and conversed with them.

"But, after all the trouble the Fr. Visitor took in negotiating with the Viceroy for these lands and when we thought that everything had been done and the business settled, on our arrival at Masqat to go and take possession, I found all the officials of the 'king'⁴ of this country opposed to these people, and all that coast of Arabia at war with the Portuguese, the Arabs having already conquered a good part of it, chiefly Duba with all its district. So the Portuguese, being unable to carry on the war, came to make terms of peace with the Arabs, who remain masters of all the land conquered, and the Portuguese with the little that is left. Finding the country in that condition the 'Christians' (of S. John) were unable to enter into enjoyment of the concession made them, and I unable to execute that object for which I was sent. I stayed at Masqat three months in the house of the Augustinian Fathers. When after five months a reply came to my report to Goa, it was not that desired. For the Viceroy, seeing the Straits of Hurmuz in that state and peace also made, since there was no lack of lands in India to accommodate the Mandaeans, summoned them to go there, where he could arrange for them better than in the Straits. But obstinately they declined to go to India and say openly that they will not go:

¹ S.R., vol 135, p. 491.

³ O.C.D. 236 b.

² Fr. Dimas, Isfahan, 20.5.1634, O.C.D. 237 b.

⁴ Shaikh or Sultan is doubtless meant.

"and so I reported everything once more to the Fr. Visitor in detail, so that he might try to do something with the Viceroy. . . . I decided to cross to Isfahan, where I am now awaiting a reply from the Fr. Visitor. Although they are by way of being people in a terrible state, and that is also the reason which renders them odious to the Portuguese, and for sure God knows what I have suffered in the little time I was with them in taking their part on many occasions with the local inhabitants, and especially with the officials of the Sultan of this strait of Hurmuz, who are very much opposed to giving asylum to these Mandaecans. . . ."

Not only Fr. Eustace from Goa was sent by the Visitor General, but from Isfahan Fr. Melchior of the Kings was dispatched in August 1634 by the Vicar Provincial "to aid the Fathers sent from Goa to teach and convert these 'Christians of S. John'," only on arrival at Kung that October to hear that because of the Arab rising against the Portuguese he could do nothing on the Arabian coast, and to abandon the mission given him.¹

On the other hand Fr. Basil from Basra in November 1634 wrote to Rome:²

". . . regarding the 'Christians of S. John'. . . . I have just had a long report . . . it has been a matter of great pleasure for the Viceroy . . . and he has spent a great deal on them and showed them great consideration; but at present they are considerably diminished in numbers and disturbed because, when they went to take possession of the land for which they were asking, they found it occupied by the Arabs . . . they were obliged to remain in Masqat, a bad place . . . where they have only the 'king's quarter', insufficient for them. Recently I had three letters from their chief man . . . telling me that he was leaving for Goa, where he had already first gone. . . ."

The protagonist of this transplanting of the Mandaecans, Fr. Basil of S. Francis, left Basra for Rome by 1636; the half-dozen letters preserved of his immediate successor, Fr. Stephen of Jesus, do not refer to the Mandaecans: and it is only from a letter of 29.8.1643 written by the next Vicar of Basra, Fr. Ignatius of Jesus, that a revival of the movement to transplant this race is learnt:

"The bearer is a Sabaeon, who has become a Catholic together with some others of his community, going to Rome. Last year" (i.e. 1642) "the *General of the Straits of Hurmuz* 'by orders of the Viceroy of Goa wrote to me, giving me the commission to send to India all these 'Christians of S. John' scattered in these parts. I began at once to discuss the business in such a way that 30 of them were already prepared to go as pioneers to inspect the place which the Portuguese want to give them, i.e. certain lands in Ceylon. But they were denounced to the Muslim Arabs and some of them arrested, so that of the 30 only five left carrying letters for the rest of their community.

"This year, when I was thinking that I should be able to settle the business with greater success, a much greater obstacle has interfered, because this year no convoy of Portuguese vessels is coming—in fact every day the arrival of the general with a fleet to make war on the Pasha is expected. . . ."³

Although the rest of the story of the relations of the Carmelites with the Mandaecans properly lies outside the reign of Shah Safi and this chapter, it may be more convenient here to include it.⁴ On 19.12.1646 Fr. Ignatius from Basra once more addressed the Cardinals of the Sac. Congregation:

¹ Vide Fr. Melchior's letters, 8.8.1634: O.C.D. 238 b and 9.10.1634: 12.10.1634 from Kung, S.R., vol. 106, pp. 280-8.

² O.C.D. 241 g., 20.11.1634.

³ O.C.D., 241 m., and 28.6.1644, S.R., vol. 62, p. 212.

⁴ A Brief of Innocent X in Arch. Vat., *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 54, p. 69, undated, but from its position in the record probably of 1644 or 1645, is addressed to "All the Christians of S. John", inviting them to submit to the Holy See. It is given in the appendix.

"Some months ago I wrote to Mgr Ingoli, Secretary of the Sac. Congregation, in reply "to a letter of his, especially about some points concerning these 'Christians of S. John'.
 "... Now, to your Eminences I have to add that I have found some books regarding
 "their beliefs, and one in particular, which with the help of a person learned in their lan-
 "guage I am translating and, when the translation is finished, I shall send it with the others.
 "... The Viceroy of Goa has placed in my hands the business about the transplantation
 "of these 'Christians of S. John', in regard to which I shall relate what has happened up
 "till now. . . .

"In the convoy of Portuguese ships, which came this year at the beginning of September
 "to Basra, there arrived a letter for me from Don Juliano de Noronha, 'captain-general of
 "the Straits of Hurmuz' written to me by order of the Viceroy of Goa, in which on his own
 "behalf and that of the Viceroy he begs me earnestly to *try and revive* that business, which
 "began in the time of Fr. Basil and then collapsed, with regard to transplanting the
 "'Christians of S. John', who are scattered about here in Basra and neighbouring townships
 "of Persia and Arabia, and *amount to a total of 10,000 or 20,000*. At once on receiving the
 "letter I summoned the principal men of the community and read to them what had been
 "written and the liberal promises made by the Viceroy to those who would go to the Por-
 "tuguese dominions. . . . I told them that it was the wish of the Viceroy that for this year
 "not more than four or five of their chief men, those with the most authority, should go to
 "discuss this business with him, and what he might wish to grant them, mainly in the island
 "of Ceylon. They answered that, when I had approved those chosen, each would willingly
 "go. So four of their older men, of fine presence, with influence and a knowledge of busi-
 "ness, were sent to Goa by me along with another twenty of their race: and I embarked
 "them on a Portuguese ship on the 16th October of this year" (1646).

By the following year, 15.2.1647 (O.C.D. 241 m.), Fr. Ignatius had written to the Order in Rome:

"... I have informed Mgr Ingoli of a book which I have composed, in which I speak
 "of the origin, customs, rites and errors of the so-called 'Christians of S. John'. . . . I have
 "written it in Latin and also in Persian, and I am now putting it into Arabic. . . ."

Of this book published by the Sac. Congregation of Propaganda in Rome in 1652 copies exist in the archives of the Congregation, and of the Order, and doubtless elsewhere: it was entitled: *Narratio originis rituum et errorum Christianorum Sancti Joannis . . . auctore P. F. Ignatio a Jesu Carmelita Discalceato*.

Though he stated at the beginning that this community are called 'Subbi'—Sabaeans—by Arabs and Persians, and call themselves Mandaeans or 'Mandaeans of Yahya',¹ (John) this Father was less cautious, less outspokenly negative than Fr. Basil had been, and seems to emphasize in his book the reality of some Christian connection or origin for the race—a theory which modern scholarship has discarded altogether. In fact his initial supposition was that the Mandaeans from long association in a common habitat with the Chaldaeans, i.e. Syrians,

"were also called Chaldaeans, but that, when about 170 years ago the Syrians abandoned
 "their obedience to the patriarch of Babylon, these people—the Mandaeans—also aban-
 "doned the Faith.

"They baptize nowhere except in some river . . . every year they hold the observance:
 "for there is one most noteworthy festival among them which they call '*aid-i-panjeh*'²
 "(i.e. festival of five days): and on these five days all—men, women, little ones—come to
 "their Shaikh" (i.e. priest) "and are baptized by him in the river, so that they may celebrate
 "the baptism of John and imitate it. . . . Near the town of Shushtar in Persia in a certain
 "field they say there is a certain house, in which they assert is the tomb of S. John Baptist,

¹ i.e. 'knowers' of John (adopting the derivation from the word meaning *gnosis*).

² These are Persian words.

"and that his body lies there. . . . But, if it be queried whence and when did they migrate
"from those parts to these districts, where they now dwell, I should say that the very great
"persecutions which they suffered in the time of Muhammad were the reason for this migra-
"tion, and that they were compelled to flee to the regions where they now dwell. . . .

" . . . They are dispersed in:	Hawaizeh	Ramhurmuz
	"Durakh	Minab
	"Shushtar	Khalafabad
	"Dizful	and other places under the rule of the king of Persia

"Others reside in the town of Basra

"Jazair

"Zakieh

"Gabou and other places subject to the Pasha of Basra.

"Others dwell in some places in the jurisdiction of Babylon under the Sultan of the
"Turks.

"But also in places belonging to the Catholics no small number of these Christians of
"S. John are living, e.g. in the East Indies in Goa, Masqat, Ceylon, under Portuguese
"rule, among them those whom I sent over to the viceroy of Goa, two years back. . . .
"Now there are about 50 of these 'Christians' in Goa, where I sent them this year to Senhor
"Juliano de Noronha, governor of Masqat. . . ."

After seeking a comparison in the 'matter, form, mode' of the baptismal ceremony, Fr. Ignatius' book gives instances of curious ritual customs of these people which may, or may not be still observed (chap. VI, p. 28):

"Of such importance is this killing of a fowl among them that it appertains to the priests
"alone to kill it: nor can he perform this office, unless he have been born of a mother,
"virgin when she married: far less are women permitted to exercise this function.

"The priest, who is to kill the fowl, takes off his secular clothing and puts on other gar-
"ments intended for this ceremony. He covers his head with a cloth, and girds himself
"with another: a third is put over his shoulders, hanging down like a stole. He proceeds
"to kill the fowl, cutting its throat with the knife, when turned toward the East. So long
"as blood flows he does not let it out of his hand, but with his eyes fixed on the sky repeats
"certain words in his tongue. . . ."

(Chap. IX): ". . . These 'Christians of S. John' venerate highly the Cross, but with such
"precautions and wariness they adore it, that they never bring it out for fear of the Muham-
"madans unless they first put out sentinels, lest they should be caught in the act by the
"Muhammadans. Therefore they never put it" (the cross) "together, except at the time
"when they want it to be adored, and they put it together in such a manner that it can the
"more easily be separated in two parts. . . . To this cross of theirs they attach such great
"reverence and respect that in praise of it they relate ridiculous fables in their books about
"it. The priests of these people wear under their shirts a tiny cross painted with a needle:
"this is the sign of their priesthood: some of them have at various times shown me the cross,
"kissing it so that they might display to me the devotion and reverence they have for the
"cross."

(Chap. XIII): ". . . The hatred, with which these 'Christians of S. John' regard the
"Muhammadans, is recognizable in many things, and particularly in that no one of the
" 'Christians of S. John' can eat any food which is cooked or prepared by Muhammadans:
"far less can they eat of any animal, which has been killed by the Muhammadans. Nor
"can they drink water in a vessel out of which some Muhammadan has drunk: indeed, if a
"Muhammadan ask them for a glass of water, they give him to drink, but after he has drunk
"they break the vessel, lest any 'Christian of S. John' unwarily drink out of that vessel and
"become defiled."

(Chap. XIV): “. . . These ‘Christians of S. John’ so dislike the colour blue, that they ‘do not dare to put on anything dyed with this colour, or touch it: if anybody be seen wearing clothing of that colour, *ipso facto* it is known to everyone that the person in question ‘professes a creed contrary to that of the ‘Christians of S. John’. . . . They tell this story ‘as the reason why they abhor that colour. They say that some of the Jews had a vision ‘in a dream, from which they learnt that the Jewish religion was to be destroyed by the ‘baptism of John. The Jews, hearing this and seeing S. John Baptist ready to baptize the ‘Lord Jesus, moved by ill-will, brought a great quantity of indigo dye, which is called ‘*Nil*,¹ with which things are dyed sky-blue or sea-blue colour and, throwing this into the ‘waters of the Jordan, when Jesus was to be baptized, stained them and made them unclean, ‘in order to prevent the baptism from taking place. Seeing this God Almighty miraculously ordered a great vessel to be carried by the angels and filled with pure water of the ‘Jordan itself, and while they raised him in the air S. John baptized Christ the Lord, also ‘raised in the air, out of that vessel: and that from that time God cursed and excommunicated the colour blue. . . .”

Further evidence of the sequel to the efforts to secure the migration of the Mandaean from the district of Basra is afforded in a certificate² dated 15.2.1649, signed by Fr. Matthew of S. Joseph, and Senhor Francisco de Campos, agent in Basra of the viceroy of the Portuguese Indies:

“We, the undersigned, bear witness that the very reverend Fr. Ignatius of Jesus, Vicar “of the Discalced Carmelites at Basra, two years ago” (i.e. in 1647) “dispatched some of the “chief ‘Christians of S. John’ as ambassadors from their race to the viceroy of Goa, together “with some other twenty who accompanied them in order to negotiate their migration “hence to Catholic countries, and in order to see the lands which the viceroy is willing to “give them in the island of Ceylon: and, if it were not for the great war the surrounding “Arabs are waging against Masqat, a large part of these ‘Christians’ would have left. “Further, we certify that the said Fr. Ignatius of Jesus in the month of October last past “sent about 50 of these ‘Christians’ to Masqat, and from Masqat they have already gone to “Goa, others of them have left with their entire families and are going with the object of “living there the life of Catholics. Further, we bear witness to have seen some letters which “the viceroy of Goa and the captain-general from Masqat wrote, thanking Fr. Ignatius “for the trouble and diligence he had taken in this matter, and begging him to continue “until it be completely effected. . . .”

A medical man, and no mean botanist in India later, this Fr. Matthew of S. Joseph had come to the conclusion after a brief residence in Basra that the religion of the Mandaean was a composite, based on other creeds—he himself thought to find a connection with the Quran

“from the ‘Sura’ (i.e. chapter) Miriam in their book of S. John Baptist: the ‘book of Adam’, “which contains all the books of the world, and according to which theirs is the chief sect “of all mankind, (the idea) taken from the ‘Sura’ Ta. Their book of ‘Zakharia’ they have “taken from the chapter Al-Anbiya (the Prophets), for instance, where they say that those “of their sect should not be mated to any other. From the chapter ‘Sad’ that God created “the angels from serpents: and from the chapter ‘Muhammad’ that in paradise there are “rivers of honey, wine, milk, etc. . . .”

Fr. Matthew had also written a tract³ on the Mandaean—“*Strada della Perdizione e della Salute*”: the ‘Path to Perdition and to Salvation’—and in it he qualified the race as ‘apes’, because

¹ The Persian word for ‘indigo’.

² O.C.D. 241 n.

³ *Vide* his letter of 28.5.1649, O.C.D. 241 n.

“they ape the Turks in their ablutions and polygamy, the Persians in their horror to eat food cooked by non-Mandaeans, or drink from their vessels: from idol-worshippers, such as Brahmins, other features: from yet others, from Christians veneration of the cross and a sort of ‘Mass’, in which flour, wine and oil are the elements. Besides, they mock at all (others) and particularly at us, saying that they would sooner become Turks than Roman Christians. If they say they want to go and live among the Portuguese, it is to free themselves from Turkish tyranny, not to abandon their own superstitions and creed. . . .”

Transplantation to Portuguese dominions was, however, shortly to cease with the loss of Masqat to the Arabs of Oman in December 1649, of Colombo to the Dutch in 1657, and then of all Ceylon: and in two letters of Fr. Matthew of S. Joseph, 22.6.1650 and 28.4.1651, he asserts:

“. . . there is no hope of doing anything with the ‘Christians of S. John’: I have baptized only one, aged about 35, whom I dispatched to India. . . . I shall shortly send a dictionary of the Mandaean tongue. . . .”

Fr. Barnabas of S. Charles, at the beginning of his long vicariate of Basra, 1.9.1650, was altogether a sceptic as regards work among the Mandaeans:

“They desire to emigrate to a Christian country, but let this be said . . . in order to remove themselves from the incredible oppression of the ‘pagans’ . . . neither I, nor Fr. Matthew, nor Fr. Ignatius, though for 9 years he was vicar of this House, have ever been able to find one of them disposed for baptism. Besides, already they go off to Portuguese territory and many come back: and of all those who return I have not seen one who has become a Christian, save a poor soldier in Masqat, 16 years ago. . . . I think that their departure to Christian countries ought to be arranged, because little by little the fathers or children would become Christians. . . .”

But before long he had altered his views, or his endeavours:

“30.11.1655. Fr. Casimir and I are fairly well content, seeing the mercy of God extended to these poor Sabaeans, nine of them and one Gentile having been baptized; but we hope that His pity will stretch out to many more; and the two brothers baptized in Rome¹ certainly give us much help. . . . Pray God because the women in these parts are very obstinate and are difficult to get to listen to reason. . . . Today I have brought into the House a young Sabaeon from Durakh . . . in whose dwelling I stayed in Durakh² for some days: he wants to be baptized, and I wish to instruct him thoroughly, as he is intelligent. . . . By means of him I hope to draw to God some six households in Durakh, where I shall go with this young man. . . .”

“2.2.1656. . . . Things are going prosperously, speaking of the object for which we have come. Every day there are people coming over from S. John to Christ by way of the water of baptism; and today, the Feast of the Purification, three women and twelve men will receive the water. . . .”

“28.5.1656. . . . In a short time there have been about thirty of the community baptized. . . .”

“18.1.1657. . . . In a few days we shall baptize a family of sixteen souls, Sabaeans, with whom I have been labouring for three years past . . . the Pasha here, now that he has learnt that these Sabaeans are becoming Christians, has set his mind of making them Muslims, and leaves nothing undone to bring them over to his own religion. . . .”

¹ These were baptized in Rome, John Baptist Orsino and Isidor Pamfilio.

² This place is in Persia, in the triangle of Khuzistan between the sea and the Karun.

The news in Fr. Barnabas' letter of 12.5.1657¹ was more serious:

"... I cannot tell you all, but shall only say that the Shah of Persia" (this was 'Abbas II) "has thrown off the mask and shown the venom he has in his heart. He has . . . ordered . . . that the Sabaeans also shall embrace the religion of Muhammad; and all those at Hawaizeh, Khalafabad, Durakh, Shushtar and Biyaban (? Bihbihan) and Pul-i-Pulad "[? sic] have done so. . . . The Pasha here" (Basra) "has received letters from the king of Persia exhorting him to purge his territory of the 'infidels' . . . which is what they call 'all who do not hold the Muhammadan faith: so everyone is apprehensive, especially the 'Sabaeans. . . ."

If the decree regarding the Mandaeans was enforced (as in the district of Isfahan Armenians had been caused by violence and threat of deprivation of their property to apostatize) the information is of historic value: for it not only fixes a date, but explains why in the Persian townships named the community of Mandaeans, flourishing till 1656, disappeared.

Writing from Basra, 5.4.1660² Fr. Anselm of the Annunciation in his *Briefve Relation* stated:

"Le nombre des dits Sabéens peust arriver à huict ou neuf mille" (8,000-9,000) "tout au plus, y compris les femmes et les enfants, et ils sont dispersez en 40 ou 50 habitations, qui sont villes, villages, ou isles. . . . Ils sont tous renfermez dans l'exercice de quatre mestiers "ou vocations. Je veux dire qu'ilz sont tous ou orfèvres, ou serruriers, ou charpentiers ou "laboureurs. . . . Ilz observent le dimanche, et ne travaillent point en iceluy. . . . "Ordinairement partout si quelqu'un d'eux se faict Chrestien c'est afin, ou que l'on leur "fasse prester quelque argent pour augmenter leur trafic, ou bien soubz l'esperance que "durant le temps de la motion" (i.e. the monsoon) "le révérend Père Vicaire de cette maison "le fera employer par les Anglois, Holandois ou aultres marchands avec lesquels ils trouvent "beaucoup de profit . . . quand nous aurons faict quelque Sabéen Catholique, si nous le "voulons conserver tel, il nous le fault envoyer à Goa, où les Portugais et la Sainte Inquisi- "tion auront soin de le faire cheminer comme il fault. . . ."

After that blunt appraisal of the sincerity of the baptisms received, and conversions recorded by his predecessors at Basra, and passing on—over the years of fighting in Basra—to 1674, it is not so surprising to read (in the edition of the *Chronicle of Basra*, published by Sir H. Gollancz, London, 1927—"The Settlement of the Carmelites in Mesopotamia") that Fathers Tussanus (Toussaint) of Jesus and Agathangelus of S. Teresa:

"finding in the book, where the names of those who are baptized are noted the names of "hundreds baptized from the sect of the Sabaeans, and in the books, where the names of "those buried are entered, not a single one of the said sect buried with us, and seeing how "very few attended the church, they were thrown into doubt, and greatly marvelled. Note "that some have said that it is easy to convert the Sabaeans and that they easily recant; "but they might have better said that they are in no wise converted, but very readily dis- "semble: and among them there is the erroneous opinion that the three or four drops of "water of Christian baptism do not render invalid the immersion of the Sabaeans, which is "done in a river, and is repeated as many times as they wish: on the other hand marriage "and burial" (according to Christian rites) "does conflict with their" (religious) "law.

"And so, from the time when our Fathers came to Basra, although they have baptized "very many, they have joined none in matrimony . . . with the exception of one who re- "pudiated his aged Sabaean wife, in order to take to wife a young and beautiful Christian " . . . when this woman went off to the Indies with her daughter married to a certain English "captain, the Sabaean grumbled for several years and at length, worn out by old age and

¹ O.C.D. 241 f.

² *Idem.*, 241 a.

"mentally and physically blind, renounced the Christian Faith and was baptized once more among the Sabaeans . . . in June 1679. Also, a certain Christian secretly carried off a Sabaeen girl or young woman who, having been instructed in the Christian religion and baptized by our Religious who were there at the time, was given to him in marriage. After her husband's death, being left in danger of apostasy, she was sent by our Fathers to Surat, where she married a Christian and from that time continued in the Faith. They are the only two of the Sabaeen sect who celebrated their marriage here at Basra in the church; but there are some, who were joined in matrimony in India in the Christian manner and on their return here rejoined their original sect. Note that it is found in the book that some, after celebrating their marriage according to the superstitious custom of the Sabaeans, ratified it in the church, but they dissembled in doing so, that they might obtain the goodwill of the Religious for themselves.

"As for burial, till now we have buried none of them, because, even if when sick in order to please the Religious they have made their confessions and received Communion, before they die they put on the seven pieces of the robe, which are a sign of their profession of faith, and give instructions to their relatives to bury them at once, before the news of their death reach the Religious. . . .

". . . Therefore the two new missionary Fathers mentioned above . . . having taken the names of all those, whom they found in the book as baptized, began to invite them all to attend at church, and to preach to the rest that they should abandon their infidel creed and embrace the true Faith. In a few days our church was full of 'Christians' " (if it be permissible to call them so) "and of catachumens; and there was not one among the Sabaeans who did not say that he wanted to be baptized: but, when warned that it was first necessary to leave the *terminus a quo* and then go on to the *terminum ad quem*, there was not one to be found willing to abandon the sect of the Sabaeans. . . ."

On 20.1.1679 four Carmelites arrived from Europe, on their way to the mission in Malabar, among them the future Archbishop of Ancyra, Fr. Peter Paul of S. Francis. So the Vicar took the opportunity and

"on the 24th January 1679¹ we summoned the Sabaeans to our hospice, both those who had already been baptized and the others not yet baptized, so that we might see whether there were any hopes of their true conversion, both of those who dissembled, as also of the non-baptized. The reason for calling them together was that, since their dissimulation in religious matters was a matter experienced and well authenticated, we had no small scruple about administering the sacraments to such a brood: a like scruple our Fathers of old had also had, as is clear from the book in which the names of the baptized are recorded, in which it is found written in the year 1624 in these terms" (the following words were in Portuguese, by Fr. Basil): "For some time now we do not baptize any Christian of S. John, because it appears to us a matter of evident scruple, as they remain in the power of their parents who are pagans, and neither know nor observe the law of Christ our Lord."

"Nor is there found in the book the baptism of anyone of this sect from that year, 1624, up to the year 1655, in which again they began to baptize them.

"And so, when very many came to our hospice on the day and at the hour appointed, in the presence of the Fathers Aegidius, Tussanus, Peter Paul and Amandus, I Fra. Agathangelus questioned them (the Sabaeans) as to whether they recognized the Catholic as the true Christian religion. They replied unanimously that they had in fact recognized it as such, and that part of those present had been baptized, and that their whole race would be baptized, the following conditions being observed:

"First, if the Pope would send them an annual grant of money towards paying the tribute which the Muhammadans exact from them every year, or, by intervening with the Sultan, would free them altogether from paying such tribute.

¹ See folios 39 *et seq.* of original manuscript of *Chronicle Bava* in Sir H. Gollancz's edition.

"Second, if, besides the baptism of the Christians, the liberty of baptizing and re-baptizing themselves, as many times as they desire in accordance with their own custom, were allowed them. . . .

"Third, if it would be permitted them to celebrate matrimony according to their own rite, and, if they should not be obliged to give their daughters in wife to Christians, nor compelled to take wives from the daughters of Christians.

"Fourth, if it were permitted them to bury their dead according to their ancient customs.

"Fifth, if they were not obliged to eat the flesh of animals killed by Christians, Muhammadans, and others outside their sect, but the liberty should be left them of eating only meat killed by their own ministers according to their custom.

"We answered them that, as to the first condition, it depended on the liberality of His Holiness: and that the last would easily be granted them; but, as to the three others, they could in no wise be granted them, and the reason for this was explained at length to them. Then in particular those who had been baptized were questioned as to why they were not living in a Christian manner at all, but in Sabaeen fashion. They replied that they always thought that it was sufficient for them to be Catholics that they had been baptized in church, and that afterwards it was permissible for them to be baptized and re-baptized, marry and be married, and to live according to their former custom. It was explained to them that, when once the Divine law had been learnt to be true, in no wise was it allowable to a man to observe the rites of a false creed, and that no one could become a Christian unless first he renounced his old belief. To which those who had been baptized as adults replied that they had not understood that at all, and that, if they had understood that to be the case, they would by no means have allowed themselves to be baptized by the Fathers. And those who were baptized, when infants, said that they did not know what they were doing, and that they absolutely wished to live and die in the Sabaeen fashion. We were greatly amazed at these answers, and greatly regretted that in former years we had admitted a number of those mentioned to the sacraments of confession and the Holy Eucharist. . . .

"... Therefore, from the time when we discovered such great unfaithfulness in this stubborn sect, we baptized none except certain who were in danger of death. . . ."

It would thus seem that from 1679 the Carmelites at Basra abandoned any attempt at proselytism among the Mandaeans. But this account will have served to give contemporary estimates of their numbers in the seventeenth century and specify places in Basra and Persia they inhabited: and to give definite historical reasons for the diminution in their numbers (in Persia by forced conversion from 1656, and in Basra district from emigration to the Portuguese possessions, where the descendants of many, doubtless, exist today no longer following Mandaean beliefs).

From the encyclopaedias it would appear that Fr. Basil, and above all Fr. Ignatius through his published book, were the first to make this isolated sect and its cult known to European enquiry generally. Before closing this account of an interlude in its history it will not be out of place to append some observations that are embodied in a monograph which the well-known literary man and advocate of Basra, Saiyid Muhammad Ahmad (formerly Khan Bahadur Mirza Muhammad, LL.B., C.I.E.) has written and been so courteous as to put at the disposal of the compiler of the present work: and his monograph is based on a small book recently published in Arabic by a Muslim student of the Mandaeans, who had devoted some time to conversing with them regarding their customs and tenets.

Firstly, as to their appellation, Subba (Sabaeen) it is well known that the Quran divided mankind into two portions—those of certain specified religious creeds and scriptures within the pale (so to speak) and the rest without the pale of the mercy of Allah, the former being known as *ahl-al-kitab* ("people of the book"). Thrice in the Quran their mention occurs: in the chapter entitled "The Cow":

“ . . . Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians and the Sabaeans, whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve . . . ”:

and there are somewhat similar verses citing these religions in the chapters entitled ‘The Food’ and ‘The Pilgrimage’. The opinion of the learned today is that the people still surviving in ‘Iraq and called “Subba” are not the real Sabaeans of the Quran at all, and are not, in consequence, of the Ahl-al-Kitab (cf. Maulawi Muhammad ‘Ali). About the *true* Sabaeans themselves¹ there are wide differences of identification, whether star-worshippers or not: and even over the derivation of the word, Sabaeans, whether derived from an Arabic or Syriac word: Arabic writers refer to the existing sect in ‘Iraq generally as Al-mughtasibah (“those who wash themselves”). It is claimed they are from forebears who in the reign of Al-Ma’mun (A.D. 830) attributed to themselves the traditional name of Subba, in order to escape the persecution meted out to non-scriptural pagans, but from which the Quranic limitation would spare Sabaeans, and the Arabs were deceived into acceptance of them at their claim, partly by the habit of the Mandaeans of turning to the pole-star in their devotions, and the original Sabaeans having disappeared or become obscure. Norberg wrote that the Mandaeans themselves derive “Subba” from the style they give John the Baptist—Abo Sabo Zakario: and Mrs. Drower, the latest writer, is of opinion that the appellation they give themselves—*Mandai*—is derived from *Manda* = a dwelling in their language, not from a word meaning ‘disciple’, or ‘those who know’, as others assert.

One of their own co-religionists, according to Mr. J. Van Ess in his *Arab of Mesopotamia*, wrote in a newspaper that:

“The Sabaeans are from among the ancient Egyptians, who emigrated to Jerusalem “at the time of the prophet John, i.e. John the Baptist . . . ”

but Mr. Van Ess, for many years in touch with the sect, declares that the John to whom the Mandaeans profess to adhere is certainly not a saint, i.e. therefore not the S. John Baptist of the Christian gospels at all. Another authority points out that the Mandaeans themselves never assumed the appellation ‘Christians of S. John’: that was the mistaken conclusion to which the early Catholic missionaries came in making Yahya Yuhanna, John the prophet of the Mandaeans, identical with the Precursor of Christ. The noted Arab writer, Zamakhshari, wrote about the Mandaeans:

“They apostatized from the religion of Christians and Jews, and worshipped angels. . . .”

According to the Shaikh, or priest of the Mandaeans interviewed by the author of the recent little book in Arabic translated by Saiyid Muhammad Ahmad of Basra, the Mandaeans

“at the beginning inhabited Harran: violent wars took place between the Mandaeans and “the people of Harran, the Mandaeans fled to Tur Madai, where they settled. One of their “old homes was Taib Matheh, which is known” (in Persian) “as the mountains of Pusht-i-Kuh. Some of them say that Mandali” (the chief place in Pusht-i-Kuh) “was one “of their centres. . . . Yet another states that the Mandaeans remained in Egypt: the “Egyptians slew them, and the survivors emigrated to Persia: the Persians slew them, so “they came to ‘Iraq.

“ . . . The total number of their male population is 5,000” (Mr. J. Van Ess in the *Arab of Mesopotamia* estimated, however, that their total does not exceed 3,000 souls, internal strife being one reason for the decrease: further, many of their women have in late years been married to Muhammadans).

“Their religious works now extant are (a) *Sidra Rabba*—the great book, and also called

¹ e.g. *Die Ssabier und Das Ssabismus* of Dr. Chlodwig Chwolson, S. Petersburg, 2 vols., 1868.

"*Ganjeh*—the treasure: (b) the *Kitab-an-Nufus* or 'book of souls', the prayers of the priests:
 "(c) *Adrafeshah Yahya*, a life of their prophet John.

"The age of the world they reckon as some 474,484 years past, and as having another
 "112,825 years to come.

"There are five classes of priests with them. An ordinary Sabaeen" (Mandaean) "is
 "utterly ignorant of the precepts of his religion, for this knowledge is confined to their priests,
 "and the members of the community cannot understand these owing to their illiteracy."

One of Mrs. Drower's publications quotes a magic roll of the Mandaeans, giving the year
 A.D. 1480 (885 A.H.) as one when the Mandaeans were almost exterminated by a massacre. She
 makes clear how entirely pagan is their conception of spirits and deities and planets.

* * * *

* * *

* *

From a summary of the relations of the Carmelites in Basra with the Mandaeans it is
 necessary to turn back to the position arising in regard to the bishoprics of Isfahan and Baghdad
 out of the death of Mgr John Thaddeus in 1633. His coadjutor, Mgr Timothy Perez, having
 the right of succession, became *ipso facto* second Bishop of Isfahan.

Before 16.12.1633 news of the fatal accident had reached the Sacr. Congregation,¹ and at
 a General Congregation of 30.1.1634:

"On Cardinal Spada reporting the opinion of the General of the Discalced Carmelites
 "regarding the bishop for Persia, His Holiness gave his approval and ordered that one
 "Brief should be dispatched in duplicate—the one, in which a faculty should be granted to
 "the Catholic Archbishop of Nakhchiwan in Armenia to *consecrate Fr. Dimas*, Discalced
 "Carmelite, residing at Isfahan as Bishop of Baghdad, and to take as his assistant (-conse-
 "crators) the most reverend Timothy, who by the death of Fr. John Thaddeus by virtue of
 "his coadjutorship has become Bishop of Isfahan, and another Catholic bishop, if there be
 "one there or, in the want of one, the Prior of the convent of the Dominicans in Alingia,
 "or the Prior of the Discalced Carmelites, or of the Augustinians, or one of the Capuchin
 "missionaries at Isfahan: by the other Brief, should the first not be possible of execution,
 "the faculty should be granted to the most reverend Timothy of consecrating as Bishop of
 "Baghdad Fr. Dimas, taking as his assistant-consecrators . . ."²

On 13.3.1634, when Cardinal Spada put in letters from Fr. Timothy, Bishop of Isfahan,
 the Sacr. Congregation itself decreed amongst other matters (regarding the oath to be taken by
 Fr. Dimas) that the

"sum of 200 scudi be given to the Bishop of Isfahan for his journey expenses, and that he
 "should be granted the faculties dispatched for the late Fr. John Thaddeus, Bishop of Isfahan,
 "on 30.8.1633, while those sent to Mgr Timothy when Bishop of Baghdad be transferred to
 "Fr. Dimas, as soon as he has been consecrated Bishop of Baghdad. . . ."

There are a number of letters from Bishop Timothy Perez on record,³ written from Spain.
 He was still young, only 39 years old, and at first willing enough to set out for the East, but
 explained to the Sacr. Congregation that, having himself no acquaintance with the Persian
 language, it was essential that he should wait until he found a companion who did. Thus in
 his letter, 29.3.1634, he wrote:

¹ Vide *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, by the late Fr. L. Lemmens, No. 10.

² *Idem*.

³ Vide *S.R.*, vol. 104 (V), 'Lettere di Spagna,' etc., 2.5.1634: 13.2.1634: 29.3.1634: 22.7.1634: 18.8.1634: 18.9.1634.

"... Hitherto I have been unable to get hold of the Brief and papers which Mgr "John Thaddeus left: the only thing recovered by the hands of the lord Cardinal Monti is "the pallium for the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, and a small clock, which had been pawned "for 300 Spanish reals, together with other effects of his, which, they say, they have sold "to pay for the dues owing to those who conveyed him" (his corpse? was he buried at Calahorra?) "to his own country: that, however, was insufficient to get possession of that "clock, for which I have paid 96 reals to the driver of the carriage. And, if it were possible "with the money which Monsignor has given for the picture of Saint Gregory and for . . . "which remained behind in Naples to recover the money, which I lent him, it would be "doing me a great kindness."

"7.5.1634. I have received the 200 ducats from the Sacr. Congregation, and am ready "to start. I am very comforted at the excellent selection of Fr. Dimas, whom I shall "endeavour to help."

Perhaps dismayed at the expense of the voyage, as well as his own lack of acquaintance with the East—an Augustinian Fr. Melchior of the Angels, who had three times made the journey to Persia, gave a detailed estimate of cost by the two routes to be read in *S.R.*, vol. 104, p. 33. Bishop Timothy finally begged to be excused from proceeding to Persia, repaid the journey expenses advanced¹ and, in view of insistence from Rome, in a letter of 22.7.1634 from Madrid put forward as a substitute for himself:

"Doctor Don Antonio de Barros y Mendoza, priest and chaplain to the king of Portugal, "as suitable for founding the cathedral church in Persia, if the Sacr. Congregation would "honour him by making him bishop: for he has more than 100,000 scudi in India, left by "his father, a governor in those parts. . . ."

Another letter from Mgr Perez pointed out that when the orders from the Sacr. Congregation reached him, 1.5.1634, the fleet had already sailed from Lisbon 20.3.1634, while Fr. Andrea Salazar, the Augustinian whom he hoped to take as his interpreter, had not put in an appearance. Another letter of 18.8.1634 emphasized his financial straits: he had already spent in advance the amount of four years' income, which his brother had lent him, besides 2,000 scudi expended on the journey of himself and Mgr John Thaddeus. He needed a capital sum for a journey of 22,000 miles.

He remained in Spain, temporizing, at first aiding the Bishop of Segovia, until in 1639, events making this necessary, by decree his title was changed to that of Lystra, and he was deputed as suffragan of the Archbishop of Toledo, where Bishop Timothy died 5.4.1651 and was buried in the convent of his Order.²

Meanwhile the other nomination by the Sacr. Congregation, that of Fr. Dimas of the Cross to be Bishop of Baghdad, had been equally ineffective. The news reached him during his visit as Vicar Provincial to the convent of Goa in 1636, as also that Pope Urban VIII had, as a special favour, dispatched the episcopal insignia for him: and so contrary were a prelacy and mitred rank to the ideals of Fr. Dimas as a Carmelite friar that he was greatly afflicted at the selection and steadfastly refused to accept it. Two references occur in his letters preserved:

"16.5.1636. Our lord" (? the Pope) "has done me a particular favour in bringing me "back to the Mission in Persia, where I hope to die."

"13.8.1636. . . . I am very satisfied with the state to which our Lord has called me, "because it is my duty to live and die in it. To change it would seem to me to be unfaithful "and ungrateful to my Order. . . ."

In fact he did not leave Goa to return to Persia until the new Visitor General had reassured him:

¹ *Vide Hierarchia Carmelitana*, by Fr. Ambrose of S. Theresia, part 1, p. 15.

² *Idem*.

"your Reverence can come without any fear or risk whatever, you need not be afraid of
 "either mitre or crozier . . .":¹

and, 23.12.1639, he died at the convent, Isfahan, a simple Religious.

The position by 1636 being that there was a canonical bishop of Isfahan alive in Spain, who had no intention of proceeding to his diocese, and the appointment to the bishopric of Baghdad having been thus declined, the Sacr. Congregation was faced with the need of finding some solution. It was the period when the policy of Cardinal Armand de Richelieu to gain influence for France in opposition to that of Spain was stretching more and more afield; and the recommendation of the Sacr. Congregation was determined in the following circumstances.

A certain Antoine de Ricouart, councillor in the Parlement of Paris, dying childless in 1629, his widow Elisabeth, *née* Le Peultre, residing in the rue de la Verrerie and owner of a property near Meaux, had become the benefactress of the Convent of the Carmelites also near that town. She died early in 1640, and for a number of years previously had desired² to devote part of her wealth to propagation of the gospel among infidels. During the years 1631-7 a certain Fr. Bernard of S. Teresa, of the province of Paris of the Carmelite Order, preached courses of sermons, especially in Advent and Lent in some of the chief churches of the French capital.

Born in 1597 of a family named Duval, this Carmelite,

"who already enjoyed a great reputation for eloquence and learning, and who had played
 "an important part in the foundation of a number of the Carmelite houses in France
 "(Rouen, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Marseilles, etc.) was at the time Prior of the Convent of
 "Crégy near Meaux, and confessor to Madame Ricouart. Because of his sermons both (the
 Queen) "Anne of Austria and Cardinal de Richelieu had him in great esteem. . . ."³

In or before 1637, then, Madame Ricouart, in pursuit of her pious object, made to the Sacr. Congregation in Rome an offer of 6,000 Spanish doubloons to set up and found a bishopric in the East, attaching, however, the conditions that she herself be allowed to nominate the first bishop, and that all his successors must have been born in France. In transmitting her offer she put forward the name of Fr. Bernard of S. Teresa, then Definitor for the Paris province of the Order: and the Sacr. Congregation found the offer so opportune as to accept it, conditions and all.

"In a special session, 11.12.1637, on instructions given by His Holiness on 7th December,
 "the Sacr. Congregation had in consideration Fr. Bernard of S. Teresa, Discalced Carmelite,
 "who is proposed by a certain French person, who desires to endow a bishopric in infidel
 "countries, and the bishopric to be set up in Persia for the said Fr. Bernard,"

and agreed to both proposals.⁴ On 27.12.1638 the Pope wrote to Fr. Bernard summoning him to Rome, where the Carmelite arrived early in 1638.⁵

"In a Secret Consistory, 28.7.1638, His Holiness by Apostolic authority made provision
 "for the church of Baghdad,⁶ vacant by reason of the coadjutorship of Fr. Timothy, first

¹ *Vide* his biography in *Hierarchia Carmelitana*, by Fr. Ambrose of S. Theresia, 1934.

² A footnote by Fr. Ambrose to his biographical notice of Bishop Bernard in *Hierarchia Carmelitana*, part 2, refers to a contemporary diary for the reason for this desire, the lady having previously been noted for avarice. A young relative, intent on obtaining her wealth, had tried to poison her: she saw the sin of it.

³ *Vide* publications of M. Leon Mirot, Conservateur at the Archives Nationales, Paris, e.g. "Le séjour du Père Bernard de Ste Thérèse en Perse" in *Etudes Carmelitaines*, 1933, and *Lettres écrites de Perse et de Syrie par le R. P. Bernard*, Clamécny, 1933.

⁴ See *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10, Baghdad.

⁵ *Vide* M. Mirot's works quoted.

⁶ *Hist. Miss.* relates that Baghdad was selected by the Sacr. Congregation for the endowment by the French lady partly because in 1610 Elias, patriarch of the Chaldeans, whose metropolis was Baghdad, had transmitted a profession of faith to Pope Paul V through his archdeacon, Adam, and following the Pope's reply in 1614 the Patriarch had convened a synod

"Bishop of Baghdad but now of Isfahan, in the person of Fr. Bernard, and set him to be
"bishop over it . . . he ordained that Fr. Bernard, Bishop of Baghdad, should be appointed
"Vicar Apostolic of the diocese of Isfahan during the absence of Fr. Timothy, bishop of that diocese,
"or on the latter's departing this life, with the faculty of residing in the said diocese of Isfahan,
"since he can there effect more because of the Shah's presence and other reasons considered
"at the time of the dispatch of Fr. John Thaddeus, and also (with the faculty) of appointing
"one or more vicars in it. . . ."¹

A Brief was issued, 18.8.1638,² and on 22.8.1638 Fr. Bernard of S. Teresa was consecrated by Cardinal Pallotta in the church of San Silvestro in Capite, Rome. Faculties were issued to him, 30.8.1638.³ He quitted Rome, 14.9.1638, and reached Paris, 11.10.1638: and there he received instructions from Cardinal de Richelieu, and letters addressed to the Sultan of Turkey. Setting off 19.4.1639 from Paris and 10 7.1639 from Marseilles, via Malta and Smyrna he reached Constantinople, 2.9.1639; only to learn that all calculations on administering the two dioceses of Baghdad and Isfahan, both under Persian control, from Isfahan, had been shattered through the recapture of Baghdad by the Turks in December 1638.

To the student of history the criticism immediately presents itself—why in circumstances, where his two charges had by this event become separated inside two mutually hostile empires, Bishop Bernard had not made the attempt to establish himself in his see by right and, while still in Constantinople (as he was till 9.2.1640), to obtain the Turkish Government's consent to his residing in Baghdad, instead of proceeding, as he did, to the diocese of Isfahan, of which he was only Vicar Apostolic *ad interim*. In so doing, to judge by the sequel, he made an error in tactics, and put back for a century any organization of the Catholic Church in Mesopotamia.

Even before he left Constantinople, in fact, in a General Congregation, 6.9.1639,⁴ Cardinal Antonio Barberini reported that the Bishop of Baghdad (or Babylon) was

"pressing for some provision to be made lest the Apostolic Vicariate in the diocese of
"Isfahan conferred on him by His Holiness should cease if Fr. Timothy, Bishop of Isfahan,
"should betake himself to that city; because, as by the help and financial aid of certain
"benefactors he is intending to found in that city a cathedral church for the Latin rite, he is
"unwilling that another should enter into the enjoyment of his labours. . . .

"The Sac. Congregation directed verbally that through the nuncio in Spain by way of
"letter it should be notified to Fr. Timothy that His Holiness, considering his" (Bishop Timothy's) "declaration, so very frequently made to the nuncio in Spain and to the Sac.
"Congregation, that he was unable to proceed to Persia for urgent reasons, desired to bestow
"that diocese of Isfahan on a person who would reside in it, and accordingly had provided
"him (Bishop Timothy) with the bishopric of Lystra.

"This was approved by His Holiness, 7.11.1639."

A Brief of 13.2.1640 (vol. 881, p. 16) also made Bishop Bernard Apostolic Administrator of the diocese of Ctesiphon. . . .

Proceeding therefore through Broussa, Tokat, Sivas, Bishop Bernard reached Erzerum, 4.4.1640, and thence, after crossing the Persian frontier, along the banks of the Araxes to Erivan (18.4.1640). On the following morning he made the half-day's march to Echmiadzin in Armenia Major, residence of the Katholikos of the schismatic Armenians. The Bishop had with him two French Carmelites as his chaplains, and as his interpreter and general factotum

at Amid (Diarbakr) in which submission to, and union with, the Holy Roman Church was decided for the Chaldaeans. Turco-Persian wars had prevented the Holy See from seeing this union properly established: it was thought that, by placing a bishop in Baghdad, Christians there would be served and also the Missions in Isfahan, both places being under Persian rule.

¹ *Vide S.R.*, vol. 210, p. 9, which, however, gives the date of the decree of the Sac. Cong. as 13.11.1639.

² *Vide Briefs*, vol. 62, p. 52.

³ Faculties were issued to him, 30.8.1638 (*vide S.R.*, vol. 209, p. 131 *et seq.*).

⁴ *Vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10, by Fr. L. Lemmens.

Ferdinand Gioerida, son of a brother of Pietro della Valle's Chaldaean wife who, baptized by Fr. Dimas at Baghdad, 26.11.1616,¹ had later been sent to Rome and, entered in the Urban College of Propaganda, had been ordained priest in due course—a man of value because of his knowledge of several oriental languages. At Echmiadzin Bishop Bernard delivered a Brief from Pope Urban VIII to the Katholikos,² with whom he was to take up once more the discussions regarding union of the Armenian church with Rome, which had last been active in 1629 in the time of the previous patriarch. Bishop Bernard found the Katholikos Philip in church with his monks and, after being regaled with a meal of parched pulse and salad, was invited to the refectory where the Armenian bishops and Vartapets were sitting on the ground: the Katholikos and the Bishop of Baghdad were accommodated with seats, and a little wine was served. On the following day, after the Bishop had been invited to attend the Armenian liturgy, he was entertained at the common table with the monks, who were given flesh-meat and wine, it being a feast-day. The Brief was presented to the Patriarch, who received it standing, kissed and then placed it on his head in sign of reverence, stating that the reply would be given in Erivan.

Judging the business on hand to be simple the Bishop of Baghdad started the same day for Erivan, whither the Katholikos followed him and sent an Armenian bishop and vartapet to compliment him. The next day these dignitaries came for him and, after he had mounted, guided him to the monastery where the Katholikos was residing. The party having dismounted not far from the door of the church, a vartapet put on Mgr Bernard a rich cope of flowered gold brocade and placed in his hands a cross of relics: and then he was conducted by two bishops and a large number of monks in procession into the church, at the door of which stood the Katholikos. On their taking their places, the latter saluted him by rising and placing his hand on his breast. After prayers a vartapet washed his feet. He was taken to a meal, and shown much attention. This civility continued for some ten days, during which the patriarch came to call on him three times, whereas in the ordinary course he left the monastery rarely: he recommended the Bishop of Baghdad to learn Armenian, because it would assist them to discuss their difficulties without the need of interpreters. To Mgr Bernard all these were signs of a favourable disposition of the Armenian patriarch towards the question at issue; but, on the union being broached, Katholikos Philip disabused him by contesting the primacy of Peter among the Apostles, and after a long and fruitless argument the Bishop of Baghdad took the road to Nakhchiwan, where he had been invited by the Archbishop of the Catholic or 'Frank' Armenians. On Ascension Day, 17th May 1640, Mgr Bernard celebrated pontifical Mass in their church. By the 22nd of that month he was in Tabriz: on 9.6.1640 he passed Sultanieh and, 7.7.1640, he was escorted with much ceremony into Isfahan by the Vicar Provincial, the Prior and other Carmelites (mounted on horses borrowed from the English 'Resident'), by the Augustinians and a number of Christians.

On the octave day of the Assumption (22.8.1640) when about to vest for Mass, the Bishop of Baghdad received the summons to make his first visit to Shah Safi. He handed to the Shah a portrait of Pope Urban VIII,³ which the monarch accepted with marks of esteem. Invited to remain to the midday meal, the bishop made his excuses, because he had not yet said his Mass. On his return to the convent he had the bells rung, to the surprise of the Persians, who took it to be an expression of the delight of the Bishop at having had the honour of an audience.

He set to work to acquire some Persian, though it would appear that to the end of his twenty months' residence in the country he had need of an interpreter in his discussions. A man of wide education, with some knowledge of Italian, Spanish and Portuguese as well as Greek and Hebrew, he made an impression on the Shah when it was ascertained that he was versed in astronomy and offered to teach it to Persians interested. Realizing the zest that intelligent Persians have for philosophical discussion, he recommended the missionaries

¹ See O.C.D. 237 b, a copy of the baptismal certificate.

² This Brief has not been observed in the *Epist. ad Princ.* series in the Vat. Secr. Archives by the compiler.

³ Can this painting still exist as a State possession, or privately in Iran?

to make philosophy a medium for conveying Christian doctrine and himself set the example.¹ Mgr Bernard was affable in manner, and the Persian notables used to frequent him; but, as MSS. *Hist. Miss.* notes, although Persians were individually ready enough to listen to the expounding of points of Christian doctrine and admitted it good, even at times conceding their own dogmas to be devoid of reason, it was another question to get them to abandon their faith. One reward, at least, he had: a young man of good family, aged 23 and speaking two or three languages, came and asked for baptism. After giving him three months' instruction the Bishop of Baghdad baptized him by the names Paul Armand,² the second after Cardinal de Richelieu, who had written that he wished to protect the Mission, Monsieur de Monterey, a Frenchman being the godfather: and then in full pontificals the Bishop confirmed him.

On the other hand, as the months of 1641 passed, there came disillusionment and trials.³ The 'Instructions' from the Definitory General, Rome, 6.1.1630, included one for the Fathers that:

"whenever they find themselves obliged to receive anyone (as a guest) in the hospice, whether he be a Religious or layman, they are to warn him on his first arrival of the length of time it is permitted to have them in the house, so that they (the guests) provide themselves in good time with a dwelling. . . ."

and the 'Instructions' of the Praepositus General dated 1635 to Fr. James of S. Teresa, Vicar Provincial, had included one applicable to the case:

"the Fathers shall not be obliged to give hospitality to bishops who proceed hence to Persia, if they shall be of our Order, except for a few days. . . ."

Bishop Bernard had with him a numerous personal suite: with it he had from his arrival taken up his abode in the convent of the Carmelites; and in the indebted condition of the community at that period the burden of expense proved far too heavy for the Fathers. On 14.4.1641 the Vicar Provincial felt obliged to protest to the Sacr. Congregation and request orders for the Bishop of Baghdad to find a separate abode for himself:⁴

"After having honoured and served him for six months, as if it had been not our Father General, but Cardinal Barberini himself . . . on the second day of the present year (1641) with all due reverence I notified Monsignor that he should provide for his own 'familia'; because I could do so no longer: it was contrary to our Rule to have seculars in our house for so long, and, besides, we were in great poverty, and the little charity he had given us was so limited that the Convent was like to come to grief with the burden in such troublous times; yet, to show that such a change was little to our liking, and to be of service to him, I added that the whole House and our refectory would still be at the disposal of himself and his companions: and, as the present was out of the usual time for laying-in supplies, he was told by the procurator of the convent that part of all our stock of wine, wood, butter, etc., would be given him. . . . The apartment, where I had entertained him as a guest, contained much more room than was needed for himself and his 'familia': and this gradual taking possession of the House troubled my mind. . . ."⁵

¹ Compare letters of Fr. Gabriel from Paris, one of the pioneer Capuchins at Isfahan, 4.1.1636: 6.3.1636 (S.R., vol. 135, p. 525):

"The principal thing needed now is to have many discussions with the learned of this country on philosophy, and explain it to them according to Western ideas, so that we may enter into their esteem, and be able later to persuade them on points of our Faith."

² This presumably was the 'Paolo Zaman', the painter trained in Europe well known to connoisseurs of Persian art, already mentioned in these pages.

³ The preceding account is taken from MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 6, book 7, part 4, which must have been compiled from original narratives no longer available.

⁴ Fr. Dominic of Christ, Shiraz to Mgr. Ingoli, secretary of Sacr. Cong., O.C.D. 237 e, 14.4.1641.

⁵ *Idem* to Order, 11.4.1641, and Fr. Felix, 20.2.1641: 4.6.1641, O.C.D. 237 i.

The Vicar Provincial left for Shiraz and India: and after his departure fresh conflict arose over the Bishop trying to take still another room for his books, contrary to directions left by the Provincial: the Bishop and his companions were French, the Fathers at the convent nearly all Italians: and the incompatibilities of temperament—"the prelate is saintly and good, but "these regions require someone more phlegmatic . . ."—made matters more strained, so much so that the Visitor General, Fr. Charles of Jesus Mary, 15.7.1641, reported to Rome:

"I was on the threshold of departure and my return" (to Europe), "but seeing things "and the state of the convent of Isfahan through the presence of Mgr the Bishop of Babylon " . . . in our House, where he acts as if it belonged completely to him . . .",

and decided to remain in Isfahan to use his authority.

Bishop Bernard of Baghdad had, in fact, been endeavouring to secure separate accommodation for himself, but to be provided gratis by the Shah: and, having learnt in Rome of the offer of Shah 'Abbas I, many years previously, in connection with Echmiadzin and the Armenians to build a church and house for a bishop to be sent by the Pope, had attempted, after his arrival in 1640, to argue this to Shah Safi as a pledge still binding: in his own letter, 26.3.1641,² to the Cardinal Prefect the Bishop refers to the result:

"Since my last letter of the 5th October, by which I informed your Eminence of the "good and favourable reception I had received from the king of Persia, a considerable "time had passed without my having learnt what reply he intended to give to the Brief "from His Holiness, nor, too, how far he was willing to acquit himself on the occasion of "my arrival in this country expressly to receive the execution of the promise, which His "Holiness says he had had in letters of the late Shah 'Abbas, to build a church in Isfahan "for the bishop whom His Holiness would dispatch.

"On this the Shah contradicted that his grandfather had ever made such a promise, "and has absolutely declined to do this for me³ so that all that I have so far been able "to do is to have *obtained his (the Shah's) consent to my purchasing a house* in this city of Isfahan "at my expense, as I hope to do in a few days for myself and for my successors, notwithstanding my poverty. After that I shall see how to obtain permission anyhow for" (making) "the church. . ."

During the summer of 1641 Bishop Bernard of S. Teresa did in fact decide on a house and agreed on a price of 2,000 ecus⁴ (=5,500 French livres); but the contract took four months to deliver, because two Arab notables, who had been despoiled of their domains, were residing in it and waiting for Shah Safi to give them assistance in the recovery of their country; so that it was 2.10.1641 before the deed of sale was signed and legalized, purchase being in the name of the king of France⁵ (though M. Leon Mirot writes 'in the name of the Bishop personally'), and the money paid. Possession was taken, 9.10.1641.

The Bishop's secretary, Fr. Louis of S. Teresa, is presumably the writer of a communication to some dignitary in Rome, dated from Isfahan 30.11.1641:⁶

"Monsignor de Babylon, to whom I have read your letters, has bidden me write to you "that he is more obliged to you than to anyone else in the world, that he holds the honour "of your friendship dearer than that of anyone else.

"He has seen how Mgr Ingoli has told you that the Spanish bishop" (Mgr Timothy Perez of Isfahan is meant) "had obeyed the Pope and resigned the bishopric of Isfahan:

¹ Fr. Charles of Jesus Mary, O.C.D. 236 b.

² *S.N.R.*, I, p. 67.

³ *Vide* also Fr. Dominic of Christ, Shiraz, O.C.D. 237 c, 14 4.1641: ". . . The reply to his (the bishop's) memorial "to the king (was) that he (Shah Safi) was neither willing to give him a house nor permission to build a church, because the "three existing churches" (i.e. of Augustinians, Carmelites, Capuchins) "were sufficient. . ."

⁴ M. Leon Mirot's publications, cited.

⁵ *MSS. Hist. Miss.*, chap. 6 and chap. 12, book 7, part 4.

⁶ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 65.

"and this news reached him at the time when he was taking possession of the fine house which he has bought from the owner for 5,500 livres, paid in front of the Qazi, who is the civil lieutenant in this city, in fine golden pieces weighed out. He has preferred to purchase this house, to his own inconvenience (as he has kept for himself only what is necessary for food and to set out on his journey) than to be assigned one of the houses of the Shah, very fine as they may be and at his choice, which had been offered him . . . because such gifts of houses are uncertain and can be revoked at the caprice of any favourite: of this the Capuchin Fathers are an instance in point. . . ."

According to a description of it

"sent from Isfahan by Monsieur de Monterey¹ the main part of the dwelling had a frontage all round of 25 toises: it consisted of a fine hall (or Diwan, which are like the halls in France) with an ante-Diwan or hall open to the air in the Persian style: it was surrounded by four fine rooms and by two others at the two ends: it had a good kitchen, pantry, oven, little stable courtyard, and a winepress. In the upper storey one complete suite, where Monsignor lives, consisting of another fine hall, with one good-sized room, a dressing-room, etc., the rest of the floor space being in two balconies.

"Below, for the whole length of the main building, there is a fine veranda, 3 toises in breadth, decorated in its midst by a large pond, into which flows the running water which passes through this house and which leaves it in a fine cascade to fall into the first garden, which is planted with every kind of fruit-trees and measuring some 30 by 40 toises, and waters also a second garden of like size, planted with excellent vines and surrounded with roses in espaliers and the rarest flowers in the country. . . ."

To contrive his 'cathedral' church, Mgr Bernard of S. Teresa removed the partition-wall between two rooms

"and that gave a length of 7 rods by 3 by 3 in height. There was a cupola after the style in Rome, a small choir, the bishop's throne, 6 seats for canons, organ, the sacristy, and its little nave, on the door of which are the arms of Mgr le Cardinal" (i.e. Armand de Richelieu) "as protector of the first cathedral church."²

The whole cost came to 2,400 scudi.

"The high Altar, above which was spread a handsome baldaquin, had a picture of the Blessed Virgin, copied from that in S. Maria Maggiore in Rome, in a carved and gilded wooden frame. Six candlesticks of silver-gilt, with the accompanying crucifix, decked it: the credence-table for pontifical ceremonies was of similar metal, the censer and other objects of silver: a rich carpet covered the predella. The interior walls of the church were ornamented with stucco in Persian style.

"By hard manual work, in which the Bishop and his attendants joined, the edifice and interior were terminated,³ as planned, by the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 8.12.1641, when the opening ceremony took place, all the Augustinian, Capuchin and Carmelite missionaries being invited, as well as Catholic laymen in Isfahan. Preceded by several youths in cottas, and by the Religious in the habits of their various Orders the Bishop of Baghdad, wearing as also the officiating priests vestments with trimmings and fringes of gold, entered the church from the sacristy and, when he had placed himself in his episcopal seat, the rite of blessing the church began: at the end of which to the accompaniment of the organ and the chant of all the ecclesiastics solemn Mass was

¹ From *Hist. Miss.* MSS., chap. 12, book 7, part 4: it is also given by M. Leon Mirot in his publication cited.

² One *toise* = 6 feet or 1.949 metres as measure of length. One *perche* (i.e. rod), as measure of length = 20 or 27 feet, according to locality: compare M. Mirot's details of the church.

³ The site was in the Shaikh Sha'ban quarter of Isfahan—see *S R.*, vol. 135, p. 292 (a letter from the Augustinian Prior)

"celebrated, in the middle of it a sermon in Arabic being preached by Fr. Basil of S. Francis, Vicar of the convent: a plenary indulgence was published.

"The Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, at that time visiting Isfahan on business concerning his church, was also present. . . . For the rest of his stay in Persia Bishop Bernard continued to officiate publicly in this church, without experiencing the least molestation from Muslims. . . ."¹

There is extant,² in a letter in Latin from the Bishop to the Pope, dated 20.12.1641, the announcement of this ceremonial opening:

" . . . I make known to Your Holiness, Holy Father, that the first cathedral church has been founded in this city of Isfahan, and erected under the patronage of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, the sacred offices being celebrated in it on the day dedicated to her Immaculate Conception. . . ."

(This account duly reached Rome, and was reported by Cardinal Spada in a session of the Sacr. Congregation, 24.11.1642.)

The MSS. *Hist. Miss.* (chap. 12, book 7) explains:

"The Catholics of all races in Isfahan had hailed Mgr Bernard as a new Moses and liberator on his arrival: they had looked to see in a Latin bishop one who would be effectual in his good offices with the Shah, in order to lighten the yokes on them, and one who would relieve their wants and financial straits. Seeing then" (after this interval) "that he obtained nothing beyond mere words from the Shah, and that he was more in need of monetary offerings than in a position to dispense alms, they began to treat him with indifference and, except for the devout, to care little whether he established his position in Persia or not. . . ."³

On his part Bishop Bernard had formed a bad opinion of the local Christians, and M. Leon Mirot, in his publication in *Études Carmelitaines*, cited—'Lettres du Père Bernard de S. Thérèse . . . etc.', p. 152—quotes a letter to the bishop's sister, 19.9.1641, in which he speaks of Christians in Persia:

"qui se disent Catholiques mais qui sont plus meschans que les Mahommetans. . . . J'advoue que les Chrestiens de ce pays ici me font incomparablement plus de peine que les Infidèles, et je tiens que leur vie abominable et scandaleuse qu'ils menent empesche la conversion des autres et que Dieu est plus prest de verser sa colère sur ce pays, à cause des offenses de ceux qui lui appartiennent en apparence que sa foy . . . si celuy que l'on envoie à ma place, ou moy si je reviens icy après le voyage que je me dispose à faire en Chrestienté ne vient avec plus de pouvoir que je n'y suis venu pour reprimer les moeurs détestables de ce pais . . . on n'a que faire de retourner, car ils détruisent plus en un jour que tant de grands serviteurs de Dieu ne pourroient faire de bien en des années entières. . . ."

M. Leon Mirot also brings out that the hostility of the Dutch⁴ in Isfahan was such that the life of Bishop Bernard was in danger, and that

"at the beginning of 1642 he was attacked, and received two or three cuts on his head from a scimitar, and two to three hundred blows from sticks on the rest of his body for

¹ and ³ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 12, book 7.

² *S.N.R.*, I, p. 65 *et seq.*

⁴ MSS. *Hist. Miss.* does not mention the armed attack, but that they threatened him if he did not leave the country, and an attempt was made to poison him in a dish of which the bishop, suspicious, did not partake, while the bearer did and escaped death only on administration of antidotes.

"the love of God and a soul. He was for a long time ill from it and hardly was he recovering than he had a violent attack of pain from gravel, to which he was subject, suffering cruelly. But he did not put off his departure which he had for long past projected for the spring of 1642. He had schemes for which it was necessary that he should return to France. . . ."

He appointed the Prior of the Augustinians Vicar General for diocesan affairs and handed over charge of the 'cathedral' church and his residence to that Order in Isfahan. An inventory was made, 13.3.1642, by the Augustinian Fathers, Joseph of the Rosary and Raphael of the Ascension. There were a number of paintings: of Christ and the Virgin: an 'Ecce Homo': a 'Flagellation': a 'S. Teresa': a 'S. Francis de Sales'.¹ Shortly after 14.1642 Bishop Bernard left via Baghdad and Aleppo (where he is stated to have held the first confirmation for 100 years): in the latter town he laid the seeds of the planting ten years later of the Jesuits in Julfa—see a letter of Fr. Amieu, S.J., to his General quoted in *Hierarchia Carmelitana*:

" . . . He (Bishop Bernard) wants on his return to take with him into Persia Fr. Amatus Chezard and another of ours . . . that he hoped to do wonders with two of our Society."

It is stated that among the plans he had in view was to obtain financial support in France for a seminary in which to train missionaries for Persia—French, presumably; but on his arrival in Paris he found his patron, Cardinal de Richelieu, dead and no one to support his plans for his diocese. So he remained in Paris until in 1645, in a general session of the Sacr. Congregation, 13.3.1645, it was reported:

"the Bishop of Baghdad, who has returned to France from his residence in Isfahan, Persia, 'is not troubling to return to it: the Sacr. Congregation directed that a letter be written to the Nuncio to admonish him to betake himself to his residence as soon as possible. . . .'"²

The result of the admonition can be seen in a decree of the Sacr. Congregation dated 7.8.1645:³

"Cardinal Spada referred" (to the meeting) "letters of Fr. Bernard, Bishop of Babylon, and at the same time certificates of doctors in Paris regarding the infirmities of the said bishop, i.e. headaches, pain in his hair, deafness, eye-trouble, on account of which the doctors in question in accordance with the rules of medicine judge that the bishop cannot undertake so lengthy a journey, i.e. to Persia, without manifest risk for his life, nor, too, remain in that country, both because he needs constantly being treated with medicines, and because in Persia there are neither doctors nor the medicines required for his maladies, to render them milder and more tolerable: the Sacr. Congregation decreed as follows: (a) it considered that, because of the said maladies, the bishop should be held and obliged either to resign his bishopric, or to take for himself a coadjutor or suffragan, so that the said diocese may not suffer by being without a shepherd: (b) if in the view of the Nuncio to France the reasons alleged are proven, they would suffice to incline His Holiness to allow him (Bishop Bernard) the favour of remaining with a quiet conscience at Paris and of devoting himself to the pious task of" (forming) "a college for sending workers to Persia, but still on condition of (his providing) a coadjutor or suffragan. . . ."

The rest of the account of the career of Bishop Bernard Duval may be read, *en resumé*, in the biographical section of this present compilation. Though the Papal decrees reconstituting the diocese, and various Briefs denominate it as 'Baghdad or Babylon' (modern scientists

¹ Vide M. Leon Mirot's publications, cited.

² *Hierarchia Latina Orientalis*, No. 10, by late Fr. L. Lemmens.

³ S.R., vol. 210, p. 9 *et seq.*

know that the two sites are far from identical), and Bishop Perez was always known by the matter-of-fact title of the existing city, for some obscure reason Bishop Bernard (and his French successors) preferred the style 'Evêque de Babylonne': and readers familiar with Paris, who may have mused over possible causes for the naming of the well-known street in the French capital, 'rue de Babylonne', will perhaps be surprised to learn from M. Leon Mirot's work that the gardens and residence of the Carmelite bishop "of Babylon" during the last 25 years of his life were so much in the public eye for the street formed in due course to be called after him.

Once again the selection of bishops for Persia and Baghdad had not prospered—the making of the second post a coadjutorship of the first had indeed complicated matters: and, following another inoperative appointment to the coadjutorship of Baghdad (to be noticed in due course) the see of Isfahan was not to have in residence another bishop for over 50 years, while a century was to pass before a bishop of Baghdad would officiate in his diocesan capital.

Bishop Bernard's 'cathedral' and episcopal residence at Isfahan were kept up, and Masses celebrated by the Augustinians till the year 1653:¹ then lack of funds for repairs became a reason for the gradual collapse through rain and snow which is the fate of all mud-brick buildings in Persia: the ultimate disposal of the premises and silverware formed the subject of litigation, far from edifying. Logically, it cannot fail to be perplexing and to appear irrational for a bishop to build a 'cathedral' in the diocesan capital of another bishop, on whose eventual appointment sooner or later tenure would have to be vacated.

* * * * * *

A letter of October 1641 written by Bishop Bernard mentions that, Kandahar having been betrayed and delivered into the possession of the Mogul emperor by the Circassian governor whom 'Abbas I had appointed, Shah Safi was about to proceed in person to recapture this frontier position. Medicine as practised by local *hakims* in Persia till this present century has been based on the ancient systems of Hippocrates and Galen, which among other summary classifications divided ailments into 'hot' or 'cold'. At the beginning of his reign Shah Safi had been advised by the medical practitioners of the Court to drink alcohol ("wine") in order to counteract the 'cold' in his system, which had been set up by indulgence in opium (a habit extremely common among Persians of distinction and authority down to the present day): whether the wine of the country, or (more probably) the potent spirit 'arak' (distilled from the fermented grapes too) was the medium, through excessive use the remedy, added to other disorders, did more harm still and so debilitated² the Shah that in May 1642 he died at Qazwin when setting out for Kandahar. The Factory records of the East India Company's agents at Gāmburūn record under date, 17.1.1643:

"We are advised that Shah Suffe, late king of Persia, being in May last"³ (i.e. 1642) "advanced as far as Cashone in prosecution of his intendments for reducing Candahar to "his obedience dyed there unworthily whilst overmuch drinking and other ryots hastened "his end. . . ."

He was buried at the shrine of Fatimeh in Qum.

Shah Safi was only 32 years old when he died so prematurely, after a reign of little over thirteen years. Nothing in the mass of original letters and other records left by the Carmelites confirms the way in which his reputation has been besmirched by non-contemporary writers of histories: on the contrary, with the exception of the extirpation root and branch of Imam

¹ *Vide S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 292.

² *MSS. Hist. Miss.*, chap. 19, vol. 4.

³ The date of his successor's accession is given as Friday, 26th Safar, 1052 A.H. 'Cashone' = Kashan.

Quli Khan and his offspring for reasons of state (which may be paralleled in European countries a century or two previously) Shah Safi appears in these archives clement and pleasant in his dealings, with none of that deceitfulness which characterized his grandfather: above all, there is no word, not the least sign of any of those persecutions of Christians which disgrace the reign of 'Abbas I and reappear in the times of 'Abbas II to Sultan Husain. Catholic missionaries came and went without let or hindrance. Internally the country enjoyed quiet. He, indeed, appears one of the more attractive of the Safawi monarchs.

*

*

*

*

*

REIGN OF SHAH 'ABBAS II (1642-1666)

ABBAS II, son of Shah Safi, had been born on Friday, 18th Jamadi I 1043 A.H.¹, i.e. early in November 1633 and, as he ascended the throne on Friday, 26th Safar 1052 A.H. = 26th May 1642, he was then not yet nine years of age.

He was not brought to the capital for many months. The MSS. *Hist. Miss.*² states, on evidence not cited, that:

“he made his solemn entry into Isfahan early the next year” (i.e. 1643) [“the Europeans “rode out nine miles to salute him,”]

remaining in the interval at Qazwin, always a favourite royal city of the Safawis: for, 14.8.1642, the Visitor General of the Carmelites,

“Fr. Charles of Jesus Mary, accompanied by Fr. Felix of S. Antony, set off from Isfahan “for Qazwin, about thirteen days’ distance, where the new king, Shah ‘Abbas, was at that “time, in order to petition him for the confirmation of the royal ‘privileges’ granted by his “predecessor to our Fathers . . .”

(i.e. assignment of premises belonging to the royal domains for the Convent, and permits for their settling and movements elsewhere with liberty of the exercise of their calling). If his first entry into Isfahan was in fact “early” in 1643, he had left again later, for a letter of 7.11.1643³ from the convent stated:

“Three days ago the king, Shah ‘Abbas, entered this city. . . .”

Generally speaking, from this reign onwards there was not the intimacy, or the frequency of direct negotiation between the Shah and European Religious at Isfahan (certainly not in the case of the Carmelites, and presumably in that of the other Orders) that had marked the previous half-century: and to that changed order several causes may have contributed, e.g. there was no longer a quasi-permanent state of hostilities between the empires of Turkey and Persia, nor were European sovereigns seeking assistance and diversions from the East against the Turks for the Fathers to be called in to assist as envoys and interpreters: for another ten years the Shah was to be a youth and stripling, who would not be likely to desire the conversation of foreign priests for enlightenment on European matters—here was a monarch who was content to leave policy and affairs of state to his chief Wazirs—while from this reign onwards the sovereigns appear to have been gradually hedged round with Court ceremoniousness and kept in a majestic aloofness, which rendered them less accessible to the people. Then—for the Carmelites in particular Pope Urban VIII, who had kept up his predecessors’ special interest in their mission and in his epistolary relations with the Shahs, died in 1644: with his successors they were not to the same extent ‘the Pope’s representatives’. Moreover, it must be admitted, with one or two exceptions and those spasmodic and ill defined, the Fathers in this reign failed to maintain the standard of correspondence of their forerunners or, indeed, to carry out the ‘Instructions’ of the Definitory General to report frequently and on all events

¹ This date is four years later than that given by Claude Barbin in his book of 1671, p. 171, *Le couronnement de Soleiman III*: “Soleiman nasquit l’an de l’Egire 1057, son père étant alors âgé de 18 ans . . .,” which would make ‘Abbas II born in 1039 A.H. = 1629-30, and 13 years old at the date of Shah Safi’s death in 1642 (Friday, 26 Safar 1052).

² Chap. 18, vol. 4.

³ Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, *S.R.*, vol. 62, p. 214.



SHAH 'ABBAS II

A miniature at the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington
By permission of the Director

in their country. Their letters are more domestic and less a connected contribution to the history of the reign.

With that explanation of many gaps which the student of today would wish to have been filled, it may be remarked that it was courtiers' language, and early, for the factors of the East India Company to write from Gāmbnun, 17.1.1643, regarding 'Abbas II:

"he is reported to be a prince of very great hopes."

Princes, in the Orient especially, at that period were 'forced' like early hothouse plants, and made to mature precociously. Less than 5½ years later, indeed, i.e. when the Shah would be not fourteen years of age, the factors of the Company from Gāmbnun recorded on:

"8.5.1648. . . . The king is made father of a young son . . ."¹

and the same year, 19.10.1648, came the entry in their Journal of the crime so mistakenly laid at the door of Shah Safi and already noticed in the preceding chapter:

". . . The 11th instant we had news in this place that the king, being weary of his "grandmother's accustomed presumption over him, not considering that he was now grown to more maturity, to be freed thereof commands that she . . . should be poisoned: which "was accordingly put into execution. . . ."

Already by 10.1.1644 a letter mentioned that a nephew of 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh (the style borne by a succession of chief ministers) was a fugitive at Basra:² on 30.9.1645 the Factors at Gāmbnun wrote³ that news had reached them that:

"'Itimad-ud-Dauleh had been murdered by other nobles."

No name was given that this personage might be identified: it is clear, however, that the outcome was contrary to the interests of the missionaries, for Fr. Dionysius added the information, a few months later, 2.3.1646:⁴

"Things here are not going well at present for the poor Armenian and Syrian Christians, "because a new Grand Wazir ('Itimad-ud-Dauleh) has been made—his predecessor, who "was a great administrator,⁵ was murdered in his house by other grandees of the kingdom: "he" (i.e. the new chief minister) "is a bigoted Muhammadan, and antagonistic to "Christianity."

With such deleterious influences at work small wonder that the Vicar Provincial, Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, from Isfahan, 12.7.1646,⁶ observed:

" . . . the king is still very young: and it is not known properly to what he inclines—some "say that it is already he who is ruling: not a few that he governs, but through others, or "on the advice of others. . . ."

Towards the end of 1648, though yet not fifteen years old, 'Abbas II had set off on the expedition for the recovery of Kandahar, which his father had prepared, but had been prevented by death from bringing to a successful issue. When the new Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites, Fr. Dominic of S. Nicolas, reached Isfahan in December 1648 he

¹ Safi Mirza, later to succeed as Shah Sulaiman in 1666.

² Fr Ignatius, Basra, to Fr. Basil, Rome, 10.1.1644, O.C.D. 241 m.

³ See *English Factories in India*, by Sir W. Foster.

⁵ Implying that Shah Safi's reign saw good, and better government.

⁴ O.C.D. 237 c.

⁶ O.C.D. 237 f.

"found the king absent, busy with the war against the Great Mogul of India. . . ." ¹

In 1649 Kandahar was at last captured, changing hands once more but, as noted in one letter from the Convent at Isfahan, ² 20.4.1650, the Persians had to fight

"that year the Great Mogul who sent a large number of men to recover it, if it were not "already taken" (by the Persians) "and to retake the place, if they found it already (as "they have in fact found it) in the hands of the Persians. . . ."

Before the end of the summer of 1650 the young Shah had "returned to Isfahan". ³ The struggle for this oft-contested position continued: twice before October 1652 the Mogul Emperor from Delhi

"had come against Kandahar, but been driven back by the Persians, and now has with-
"drawn some 12 days' distance from it" ⁴

and the pressure from India became so strong that 'Abbas II left his "pastimes", ⁵ in which he was then alleged to be indulging, and was on 9.8.1653 ⁶

"at present away succouring Kandahar, because of the great siege by" (the forces of)
"the king of India, which has come upon it. . . ."

The news Fr. Barnabas had at Basra three months later, 9.11.1653, ⁷ was that:

"the Mogul" (Emperor, and his forces) "was still staying round Kandahar, but it is thought
"that he will raise the siege this month, because the Indians cannot remain on campaign
"in winter. It is considered unlikely that he will accomplish anything, because the strongest
"arm of his forces are Persians, and he cannot utilize them against their own king of Persia.
"The others are Rajputs who are the most valiant of men in India, but of small value
"against men from cold countries. None the less the latter" (the Rajputs) "have let the
"king of India" (i.e. the Emperor from Delhi) "know that they would retake Kandahar,
"if he will give orders that cows shall not be killed, for these Rajputs are idolaters, whose
"greatest cult concerns the cow. . . . The Shah is in Mashhad, in order to be nearer the
"army. . . ."

So in December ⁸

". . . the Shah and all his kingdom are rejoicing over the victory gained against the king
"of India, the Great Mogul, from whose possession Kandahar had been wrested and freed
"—already thrice recaptured, this last time with greater triumph and glory. . . ."

The same writer, the following year, 22.4.1654, ⁹ refers to a continuation of the epic struggle:

" . . . The king at present is at Farrahabad, in order to be nearer to aid the fortress of
"Kandahar, from which he has driven back the king of India, who was besieging it. Still
"they say that the Emperor will soon return, and some say he has already arrived with
"a large army. . . ."

By that date the chief minister, and Wazir,

¹ 17.1.1649, O.C.D. 237 g.

² Fr. Barnabas, 1.9.1650, O.C.D. 242 a.

³ Fr. Balthazar of S. Mary, Isfahan, O.C.D. 236 k.

⁴ Fr. Balthazar, 3.12.1653, O.C.D. 236 k.

⁵ Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, O.C.D. 237 f.

⁴ and ⁵ *Idem*, 12.10.1652, O.C.D. 241 f.

⁷ O.C.D. 241 f.

⁹ Fr. Balthazar, O.C.D. 236 k.

"on whom our opponents relied, is already dead: and in his stead there has been appointed
"the Master of the Palace, who previously showed himself well disposed towards the
"reverend Fathers of the Society of Jesus. . . ."

The Emperor of Delhi planned to create a diversion on the western borders of Persia: for a letter from Basra of 14.8.1653,¹ referring to the large army the Moguls were sending against Kandahar, added that the Emperor Shah Jahan:

"has sent an ambassador to Constantinople, who has already arrived there to negotiate
"an alliance against the king of Persia. This business became disclosed in Kung, where
"the letters of the Great Mogul to the Sultan of Constantinople were found in a boat of
"the Arabs. . . ."

As a matter of fact, before the end of 1653 intentions to recapture the Afghan town by force had been left in abeyance, it would seem:

". . . After having been thrice severely defeated, the king of India has completely
"withdrawn his army from the town of Kandahar, and the minds of the Persians are
"relieved of anxiety in regard to it. . . ."²

"le Persan demeure en possession de la dicte place" was the remark in a letter of another Religious.³ There was, however, another scare in 1656:⁴

". . . As to the armament the Shah of Persia is preparing, and which it is said must be
"to besiege Baghdad, they wrote me from Shiraz that the Shah is obliged to turn his arms
"against the Great Mogul, who is on the way to attack him, wanting to recapture Kan-
"dahar. . . ."

But it was the Uzbaks, also on the eastern frontier, who in the following year were giving trouble:

"22.2.1657. Cette année le Persan arme puissamment et en grande instance contre
"l'Usbak. . . ."⁵

"24.2.1657. The Shah of Persia is making war on the Uzbaks, and daily sending off
"men. . . ."⁶

"12.5.1657. The king of Persia has enough to do against the Uzbaks and the Moguls.
"Here there is an ambassador from the Grand Signor" (i.e. the Sultan of Turkey) "who is
"going to Agra with presents for the Great Mogul, in order to cause the latter to persevere
"in making war on the Shah of Persia. . . ."⁷

On the other hand Shah 'Abbas II showed little or none of the readiness of his great-grandfather the first 'Abbas, or of his father, to go on campaign to fight the Turks, or any urge to recover Baghdad: for one reason no doubt the zeal for Islam and strong bias of his chief Wazirs against Christians was thrown into the scale against any breach with Sunni Muslims of Turkey. For in 1645 the Turks began their protracted operations against the island of Crete, and for its absorption into the Ottoman empire, by attacks against Candia; while in the month of June of that year the Venetians, apprehending the hostile intentions of the Turks on the continent of Europe, commenced to fortify Monfalcone near Gorizia so as to impede the advance of some 12,000 Turkish cavalry, who appeared on the frontier of Carinthia and menaced Italy.

¹ Fr. Barnabas, O.C.D. 241 f.

² Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, 16.1.1654, O.C.D. 242 c., Baghdad.

³ Fr. Barnabas, 20.7.1656, O.C.D. 241 f.

⁴ Fr. Cornelius of S. Cyprian, O.C.D. 237 a.

⁵ *Idem*, Basra, 5.4.1654.

⁶ *Idem*, Basra, 24.2.1657.

⁷ Fr. Barnabas, Basra, O.C.D. 241 f.

It was in these circumstances that, 30.1.1646, Pope Innocent X (Pamfil) appealed for solidarity to Shah 'Abbas II:

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. The fame of the warlike ability of Your Highness being spread far and wide over the world, even as it has not only gained for your royal name the highest esteem in the regard of all men, so does it also give a firm promise that very frequent victories will be gained by You. Certainly, however, You who provide Your realms and fortify them with those defences, with which not only the invasions of enemies are repulsed, but their forces and boldness are completely broken by the weapons set in motion against them, will be able now to effect this much more seasonably against the Tyrant of the Turks, the most implacable enemy of the whole universe and in particular of Your royal House. He indeed, with whom it is the wonted practice to break his plighted word to kings and princes, as it shall have pleased him, and to keep it with one just so long as he is waging war and inflicting injury on the other, only to return soon afterwards to his faithlessness, has lately broken the peace and, in no wise provoked thereto by hurt done him, with a vast fleet making an attack on the famous Republic of Venice and, greedy for the land of Crete which is in their possession, has unexpectedly assaulted and occupied the town of Canea, exerting himself to successively greater acts of ruination for the common bane.

"Therefore, while the Christian princes have enough to do in opposing exceeding strenuously their forces to his nefarious attempts, it will be an extremely prudent plan for Your Highness, having got together a powerful army, to commence hostilities against his border territories.

"With them there will be repaired by You the losses inflicted on the Persian sceptre in the past, and those" (places) "which he himself had unjustly seized will be in time recovered. Certainly less of the forces, however huge they might be, which he will see occupied with battling against the Christians and presently, as We hope, with the kindly aid of God cut up and overthrown, will be able to be transferred by him to that" (i.e. the Persian) "front for offering a resistance.

"To do this We on Our part, watchful aforehand for the public weal with Our care and solicitude as Pontiff, ardently exhort thereto Your Highness, the exceptional strength of whose empire and notable might upheld by so many troops of most warlike races and everywhere fruitful in victories and greatly to be feared by its enemies themselves, once now military operations are begun, will both gain for itself marvellous fame in the eyes of all and the greatest advantage and security for its territories.

"For it is not hid from You what great dangers the Tyrant of the Turks can create for those same territories if—and may the goodness of God forbid it—he grow more proud and more daring by the overthrow of the Christians. Meanwhile We continue to desire Our efforts to stand out with greater predilection for the policy and advantage of Your Highness: and We most earnestly beseech of Almighty God, Who gives fortitude to kings, an increase of strength for You and happiness of years against the most detestable common enemy. He who will bring You these letters and in whom We desire You to have entire confidence will in Our name explain very many things relative to this matter to Your Highness.

"Given at S. Peter's, 30th January 1646 in the second year of Our Pontificate."¹

When petitioning the Sacr. Congregation in 1649 regarding his own necessitous circumstances Fr. Ferdinand Gioerida (nephew by marriage of Pietro della Valle and already cited in this work as having accompanied Bishop Bernard of Baghdad to Isfahan and then returning to Rome in 1642 for his interrupted studies) reminded them that:

¹ Arch. Secr. Vat., *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 25, p. 19. There was another Brief, dated 31.8.1647, [to Shah 'Abbas II, also inciting him to hostilities with the Turks. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 55, p. 396 (also Arm. XLV, vol. 29, p. 250, for which also see the appendix).

"three years previously they had sent him to the king of Persia with a Brief from the Pope
"and letters from the Republic of Venice—that he had been well received by the Shah
"and took back a reply to Rome, and presented it to the Pope. . . ."¹

That would have been about June 1647, in view of a letter from the Archbishop of Pisa—see *S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 224—which is dated from Venice 4.6.1650 and informs the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation that Don Ferdinand Gioerida had got back from his mission to Persia: the reply from Shah 'Abbas II mentioned, if still in existence, has not been noticed by the present compiler in the secret archives at the Vatican or in Propaganda Fide. Before that answer from 'Abbas II to the Brief of 30.1.1646 had been brought back to Rome, Pope Innocent X had pressed the need for joint hostilities again, writing on 31.8.1647:

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. At the
"beginning of the past year We sent to Your Highness a pontifical letter of Ours, by which
"We earnestly exhorted You to move, now that the time is opportune, Your royal might
"and conquering arms against the common enemy, the tyrant of the Turks. But since
"We have hitherto received no reply from Your Highness to that letter, thinking that it
"was easy for it to have been lost in the space of such a long journey, We have had another
"copy of it made to be forwarded to You, so that, when You have perused it, You may
"clearly understand how advantageous and beneficial it would be to Yourself and to Your
"dominions to attack with a powerful and successful army the tyrant himself, when his
"attention is occupied and he is engaged elsewhere. We request this the more pressingly
"of Your Highness because at this very pause and conjuncture the strength of the Turks
"has been notably weakened and broken on land and at sea in that they are at war with
"the Venetians, and hence for these same reasons, the flower of their forces having been
"lost, they have not a little deteriorated in daring and in courage. Meantime, whilst the
"Christian princes are actively throwing their might against such a most bitter enemy, it
"will be particularly timely for Your Highness, having attacked him, to win very sweeping
"victories over him to the immortal glory of Your name and of the Persian empire. And
"this, with God helping us well, We both ardently desire and hope. Given at S. Mary
"Major under the Fisherman's ring, the 31st August 1647 in the third year of Our Ponti-
"ficate."

The nature of the reply from the young Shah or presumably his Wazirs cannot be recorded here, therefore, but, if not declining to disturb the peace with the Turks, it must have temporized, for no act of war is recorded as ensuing. The few allusions to be found in the correspondence of the Carmelites in Persia make it evident that there was no disposition on the part of 'Abbas II and his Wazirs to pick a quarrel with the Sultan and go to war with the Turks, e.g.:

"24.2.1657. The news here is that the king of Persia shows no desire to make war on
"the Turks. The Turkish ambassador, a great favourite with the Shah, is very ill: together
"with his suite of about 300 persons he is being well entertained. . . ."²

Yet, when it came to the point of buying off Persian neutrality so that Sultan Muhammad IV could devote himself to his plans for aggrandizement in Europe and the Mediterranean,³ 'Abbas II refused to tie himself:

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 261.

² Fr. Cornelius of S. Cyprian, O.C.D. 237 a.

³ From the time when in 1648 the fighter Muhammad IV succeeded as Sultan in Stambul, war with the Christian States dominated the scene: in 1649 the siege of Candia was renewed by the Turks, and in 1651 in the vicinity of the port there was an engagement, from which the Turks had to beat a retreat. From 1650–7 the Venetians had a run of successes, occupying the Aegean Islands, Volo in Thessaly, the islands of Tenedos and Lemnos off the Dardanelles. In this new emergency the Pope exhorted the king of Spain, 30.12.1653 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 59, p. 40) to an effort:

"... Huic spei cum ex haereticorum ac Turcarum armis praesentiora quoque Catholicae religionis pericula accesserint. . . . Cum sub infidelium iugo incassum gemens prematur populus Dei servitute inulta. Christianum orbem

"25.2.1658. The Shah would not accept the truce for 20 years offered him by the "Sultan. . . ." ¹

But, while Persian military preoccupations during this reign were almost exclusively with the eastern frontier, in the waters of the Persian Gulf, on its western shore, and in the Indian Ocean, another and dual struggle was proceeding, which affected in its outcome the interests of the Carmelites and Augustinians at Isfahan, Basra, Shiraz and elsewhere more closely. Till 1635, and indeed in most places till later, the Portuguese should be visualized as holding, besides Kung on the Persian coast, a string of fortified positions on the Arab coast opposite, from Masqat to Katif. In 1643 the Dutch were still at war with the Portuguese: in December 1644 peace had been made between them in India; ² prior to the renewal of that war the Arabs (those of Oman in particular) practically extinguished Portuguese interests on the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf.

"The Imam, king of the Arabs, is making war on Masqat. He has taken Suhar. . . ."

occurs in a report by Fr. Ignatius from Basra to Fr. Basil in Rome, 10.1.1644. ³ The same Vicar of Basra, 15.2.1647, mentioned:

"This year Masqat has been the objective of a terrible war, and attacked and besieged "by the neighbouring Arabs. . . ."

On his way to India from Isfahan the new Vicar Provincial, Fr. Dominic of S. Nicolas, writing at Masqat itself, 25.10.1649, ⁴ announced:

"The Arabs with superior forces are besieging Masqat: and terms have been broken off. "On both sides they are now preparing again for war and a siege: and yesterday evening "in the sight of all our men they posted their sentries. Both Portuguese and Arabs are "working hard, the Arabs in vain, I think, because Masqat is well fortified. . . ."

"I have heard", from Isfahan reported Fr. Dominic of S. Mary to Rome, 21.3.1650, "that about the middle of December the Arabs living round Masqat and hostile to the "Portuguese entered Masqat and made themselves masters of the place, sacking it and "making prisoners, and killing people, in particular some Augustinian Fathers, who were "in the convent: and the Portuguese soldiers had to retire to defend the forts ⁵ of the citadel "of Masqat, where, it said, they are in sufficient numbers and have enough ammunition "while awaiting succour from India. . . ."

A page of a letter of Fr. Felix of S. Antony, 4.6.1650, ⁶ from Basra, giving more details of this historic event, is reproduced on the opposite page; the translation reads:

"The Arabs have taken Masqat to our greatest possible shame, by the fault of the" (Portuguese) "general, ⁷ who died there of mortification over it. They slaughtered all the

"habitaculum Domini tot annorum clades invasit, ut plane diuturna bellorum serie sanguis tetigerit sanguinem. . . . "Quodsi vetera bellorum dissidia illustri victoria placet coronari, pugnate vicissim charitate non ficta . . .": and on 22.12.1657 (vol. 63) he gave permission to the Doge of Venice to raise 3,000 soldiers in the Papal States (for resistance to the Turks): and again His Holiness wrote, 6.7.1660: " . . . hanc autem pontificiae mentis lacticam adauguet "etiam spes qua reges principesque Catholicos alios eisdem defensae propugnataeque religionis laudibus operam pro "virili daturus esse credimus. Nos certe ut eos hortari et monere atque adeo propriis etiam supra tenues aerarii vires "exemplis incitare numquam destitimus. . . ."

¹ Fr. Barnabas, Basra, O.C.D. 241 f.

² Fr. Barnabas, Kung, 16.10.1643, O.C.D. 238 s: Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, 8.5.1645, O.C.D. 237 c.

³ O.C.D. 241 m.

⁴ *Idem*, 242 a.

⁵ These bear the names 'Jalali' on the east, 'Mirani' that to the west, and still hold Portuguese cannon (see the photograph, facing p. 1249).

⁶ O.C.D. 241 k.

⁷ He would appear to have been Francisco de Tanora.

H
Suo Mio

Molto Reverendo Padre

Padre:

Il mio gallo arrivò fin. ad. 22. de Maggio con Bassora
due habbiamo nominato al R. P. Vianosi. Ignazio
de Givoglio il P. f. Barnaba che 22. del mese giunse
il P. f. Matteo quale ora andato in Ega Solo con il R.
P. Priore il P. f. Tommaso de S. Mico lo quale
è rimaso in Ega il P. f. Vito e Ginto è andato in Sopano
a ricevere orfice l'elezione del Praematore e surro-
so per fargli lo Ginto nella persona del P. f. Monico
de la Bruna e per il P. f. Tommaso del Arcivescovo
more de Ega l'Arabi han preso Mascati e la maggior
vergogna nostra possibile per colpa del Ginto che
quala mi morse de degno amato loro tutti Gr. lo
grosi de S. f. f. è molto grave e l'altro fatto prigion-
diero il sacro quale fu cosa la virgola profana il
le chiese rompendo l'imagini uciando le cose sacre
fecero schiave tutte le donne e figliuoli a modo ogni
barbaro. affatto tutto de un peccato. ne se rimase il R.
Vianosi che è il P. f. Matteo quale dopo cessato proce-
dare con lo R. P. f. Priore è un pacifisto in mano
arabiana la p. x. x. alla fine miracolosamente scap-
pato de fuggire lasciando tutto in particulare molti
libri e denari; e anche con loro un uciello dove si comoda
siccome persone fou. humani e donne senza provisione sufficiente
per la qual cosa ne morono molti e fra essi il p. f. Monico
de S. Mico l'ambasciatore quale era stato a questo nuovo de R.
e l'elezione del Ginto e Ginto saluto sacramente al R. P.

Al R. P. f. Bruno del. Laura Vi. S. f. f. f.

"THE ARABS HAVE TAKEN MASQAT" FROM THE PORTUGUESE, 1649

How the news was given by Fr. Felix of S. Antony, O.C.D

(In the archives of the Order, Rome)

"Religious of S. Augustine and a great number of people, and made the rest prisoners. They "sacked" (the town) "which was a thing to move one to tears, desecrating the churches, "breaking up the images, violating sacred objects. They made slaves of all the women and "children, employing every sort of barbarity. . . . The Vicar Provincial¹ happened to "be there with Fr. Matthew, and they were present at three assaults" (on the town), "the "Vicar Provincial with crucifix in hand assisted at the firing of the artillery and in the end "escaped by a miracle, leaving everything behind, in particular many books and money, "and they went on board a vessel, in which they were about 600 persons, men and women, "without a sufficiency of provisions, for which reason many died of thirst. . . ." ["After "many risks and perils, of being captured, of hunger and thirst and storms at sea, the Vicar "Provincial and I reached Goa, having lost our cloaks, breviaries and about 200 scudi . . ." wrote Fr. Matthew of S. Joseph.²]

An extract from another letter of Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, 20.4.1650, completes the story:

" . . . I have already written" (to Rome) "how in December last the Arabs assaulted "Masqat, a port of the Portuguese in Arabia, and made themselves masters of the place, "only the fortress remaining to the Portuguese. Afterwards news came that *towards the end* "of January of this year" (i.e. 1650) "as there were many in the fortress, what between "military and persons unutilizable" (as soldiers) "and as there were no victuals in the forts, "the Portuguese surrendered and abandoned the fortress: the whole of Masqat is in the "power of the Arabs, which we regret greatly to hear, because of the prejudice to many "souls and to the position of the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf. . . ."

The site where stands the Sultan of 'Uman's palace today is known as Al-Jaraiza, a corruption of the Portuguese word for 'church' = *igreja*. So, after its valued possession for 142 years, from the time of its conquest by Albuquerque, Masqat passed out of Portuguese control as a strategic post. For the time being Portuguese trade suffered an entire eclipse, even at Basra: the Augustinians still had a house and one priest at Basra in 1645³ and, apparently, on 28.5.1649, when Fr. Matthew of S. Joseph⁴ mentions them; but the French traveller Tavernier on his second *Voyage*, p. 313, noted at Basra, 15.3.1652:

"the business of the Portuguese has altogether ceased, and the Augustinian Fathers, who "were of that nation, have also withdrawn thence. . . ."

They attempted to hold on to vantage-points on the Arabian coast: for there are two references—curiously in antithesis—to these two years after Masqat had been lost, both reports from Basra:

"18.8.1652.⁵ The Portuguese came with a powerful fleet against the Arabs, and have "already made good progress. . . ."

"12.10.1652.⁶ . . . The Portuguese by money have obtained from a princeling in Arabia "adjoining 'Uman" (consent) "that they should build a fort in Khasab in the vicinity of "the land of 'Uman, the chief in question having promised to guard and defend the passes "leading from 'Uman. So the Portuguese had already begun" (to build) "the fort in "question, and armed it with some good pieces of artillery, when the Imam of Masqat "came down with a numerous force of men to prevent the building of this fort. When the "Portuguese learnt this they took off the artillery and all the men, and 'like good soldiers' "all of them took to flight, so that some people speak of the Imam" (as saying) "I did not "come, nor did I see anybody, but I gained a victory".⁷

¹ He was Fr. Dominic of S. Nicolas, O.C.D.

² 22.6.1650, O.C.D. 241 n.

³ Fr. Ignatius, Basra, 20.1.1645, O.C.D. 241 m.

⁴ O.C.D. 241 n., Basra.

⁵ Fr. Ignatius, O.C.D. 241 m.

⁶ Fr. Barnabas, Basra, O.C.D. 241 f.

⁷ In the original Latin, parodying Caesar: "non veni, neque vidi, sed vici".

Indeed the 'Umani Arabs followed up their successes by having the Portuguese molested on the Indian coast, as appears from 'news' of Fr. Barnabas, 14.7.1653:

"The Hindu princes, at the instigation of the Arab Imam, have taken the fort of Canara "from the Portuguese."

Matters standing thus, it is difficult to verify a statement by Fr. Felix, also from Basra, 6.2.1653:¹

"The Portuguese . . . last October gained a signal victory over the Arabs, and this "year I have sure news of the safe arrival in Goa of a new viceroy with four galleons . . . "it is hoped that they will regain Masqat, if the Dutch do not disturb them . . . it is said ". . . that they are at war. . . ."

Hostilities had indeed again broken out, correspondence being seized on the seas, and even the English, through whom the Carmelites sometimes received letters from Europe, were prevented by the Dutch from bringing them.² That July Fr. Barnabas reported:³

"the Dutch in the Persian Gulf have at various times taken four merchant ships of the "English, with a great quantity of money and precious merchandise . . ."

(it was the period of the hostile relations with the Commonwealth in England, the Dutch house of Nassau being connected by marriage with the exiled Stuarts):

"the Dutch in the Gulf have also captured a Portuguese ship . . . they are masters of the "Persian Gulf with a fleet they have off cape Ras-ul-Had. . . ."

(He gives details of the attack by the Dutch on the Portuguese positions in Ceylon.) Three weeks later he emphasized the situation:

"The Dutch . . . remain masters, as it were, of the whole trade of India and Persia "and of this port at Basra, so that this year no English nor Portuguese ships have come to "Basra, whence also it comes about that we totally lack the financial aid we used to have "from the latter nation. . . ."

On 9.11.1653 the same vicar of Basra added—to show the plunder taken:

"This year no Portuguese nor English have come to this port, but Arabs and Dutch, "and more than 3 millions of Spanish gold reals; and more than 6 million have been "landed at Gāmburun. From what I see, all the money of the West Indies is coming to "these East Indies. The Dutch have taken this year 4 English and 10 Portuguese ships "and of those ten two with great riches. . . ."

To the Procurator General of the Order in Rome from Basra Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, 16.1.1654,⁴ pointed out that:

"La grande guerre qui est en mer entre les Portugais et les Anglois d'un costé et les "Hollandois de l'autre a interclus le passage de l'Inde en Perse . . ."

while the Vicar of Basra, 27.5.1654, after stating that he was sending two couriers with the letters of the Dutch Company, went on:

¹ O.C.D. 241 k.

³ 14.7.1653, O.C.D. 241 f.

² Fr. Balthazar, 9.8.1653, O.C.D. 236 k.

⁴ O.C.D. 242 e.

"Recently, two months ago, four English and as many Dutch ships met on the bar off "Sindi" (i.e. Tatta): "they fought courageously, but finally the Dutch made themselves "masters of one English vessel and sent another to the bottom, and 75 English were left "prisoners. The Dutch were building a strong residence in Tatta, the English went with "a force and pulled it down. . . ."

By 29.10.1655,¹ when he was writing, Fr. Dionysius of Jesus had already been:

"detained for 22 months at Kung on my way" (on transfer) "to Tatta, because of the war "between the Portuguese and, on the other side, the Dutch and the Arabs. I have asked "the Dutch for a *passport* and already have it with me. . . ."

Fr. Casimir Joseph, 6.4.1655,² related:

"Since the loss of the five great galleons of the Portuguese, the Dutch wanting to take "advantage of the victory made a plan to attack Goa from the sea, while the king of the "Deccan (instigated thereto by the Dutch, according to what is said) went to attack Goa "by land; but, not having been supported by the Dutch on account of the winds being "contrary, the king was driven back and defeated by the Portuguese, leaving several "thousand dead and prisoners. The Portuguese have received a reinforcement of three "ships; but, on the other hand, the Dutch have received one of eighteen ships, all at once, "and expect another. It is feared that they will make an attack on Colombo."

This Religious resumed, 31.1.1656,³ from Basra:

"The English have a reinforcement of five vessels. The Dutch have not appeared this "year, which is a sign that they are having their work cut out in India. . . ."

and from Isfahan Fr. Stephen, 4.4.1656,⁴ confirmed that impression to a Definitor General in Rome:

"This year more than 20 Dutch ships with 6,000 fighting men have come down on "Ceylon and, on disembarking, had a battle with the Portuguese: after many had been "killed on both sides the Portuguese retired to the town of Colombo, to which the Dutch "laid siege by sea and land. . . ."

By July of that year, 20.7.1656,⁵ Fr. Barnabas at Basra had the news:

"The Dutch have made two valiant assaults on the town of Colombo in Ceylon, but "were repulsed after having entered the town . . . of the Dutch some 4,000 were killed, "and the general of the Dutch slain. None the less they have returned to besiege it. . . ."

With the loss of Ceylon by 1657 the Portuguese possessions in Indian waters were reduced to a skeleton of their former wide frame: the Vicar of Basra wrote to his colleague at Aleppo, Fr. Bruno, 24.1.1657:

"The illustrious consul for France will show your Reverence the terms which the Dutch "victors have concluded with the Portuguese who have lost Ceylon in the surrender of the "almost impregnable town of Colombo, which maintained itself for seven months without "receiving any succour. In the places occupied by the Dutch the Catholics are not per- "mitted to retain any church where Catholic rites are celebrated, nor are any Religious

¹ O.C.D. 238 s.

⁴ *Idem*, 238 e.

² *Idem*, 236 l.

⁵ *Idem*, 241 f.

³ *Idem*, 241 h.

"or priests allowed to remain. . . . In a short space the Portuguese have lost eleven places —partly taken from them by the Imam 'prince' of the Arabs of Arabia Felix, partly by the king of Canara, partly by the Dutch . . . now that the Portuguese are no longer Portuguese. . . ."

Although by the suppression of the Portuguese ascendancy and trading activity the Carmelites at Basra lost the generous financial support which had been the mainstay of that Residence, the Fathers adapted themselves rapidly to the change of influence, and indeed made themselves useful to the Dutch.

The Netherlanders had first appeared at Basra about 1640¹:

"These Dutch this year sent their ships to Basra with the intention of continuing their trade in this port, where already some years ago they began it. Also the English—which is a disadvantage and prejudicial to the Portuguese and, consequently, for our House there, which is sustained by the latter. . . ."²

That was in 1645, when the Vicar of Basra also refers to a courier being sent off by, or for the "English gentlemen" (i.e. of the East India Company) to Aleppo. At that time relations between the Dutch and Persians were none too good:

"I have been told as a fact that on the 2nd inst. a courier was sent off in haste with an order from the king to seize the 'captain' and all the other Dutch at the port" (Gāmbrun), "because all³ are there now on account of certain disputes: and so a rupture between the Dutch and Persians is expected. . . . The rumour is that the Dutch have gone to war with the Persians, having retired to their ships, where they have been joined by several others, and thence" (i.e. Gāmbrun) "they have committed several hostile acts. The Persians desire peace and, as a Dutchman had remained in their hands, they brought him to Isfahan and the king has paid him great honour, sending him back post-haste with a courier to negotiate peace with his compatriots. . . ."⁴

On 9.7.1651, from Basra Fr. Matthew of S. Joseph, the physician or herbalist, wrote:

"The Dutch gentlemen" (i.e. of the Dutch East India Company) "are here with two ships, and very well disposed towards us: and I am also treating them medically. . . ."⁵

As trustworthy agents for the transmission of letters between Europe and India via Aleppo the Carmelites at Basra were extensively employed for a considerable period by both Dutch and English East India companies. The Agent and Factors at Isfahan of the latter wrote to their President and Council at Surat, 1.9.1654:

"Padree Felice, the Carmelite Padree that was in Buszorah, we have thanked for his courtesie in despeeding and receiveing our letters, and also rewarded him with some small matter. . . ."⁶

But, when the war between the Dutch and Portuguese showed signs of being protracted, that same Fr. Felix, then Vicar Provincial, had scruples whether such service to heretic enemies of the Portuguese was legitimate, or exposed the missionaries to ecclesiastical censures, and therefore referred the matter to Rome, 12.5.1655, from Isfahan:

¹ Besides the mentions of them in the last years of Shah 'Abbas I's reign it is stated that in 1635 'a certain Antonio Pereira re-embarked for India in a vessel of the captain of Masqat, which was taken by the Dutch 35 leagues beyond Ras-ul-Had, and plundered. Pereira taken to Gāmbrun was sold as a slave.' See S.R., vol. 107, p. 143.

² Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, 30.7.1645, O.C.D. 237 c.

³ At Isfahan in 1655 the Dutch were only four or five Factors, see Fr. Casimir, 16.1.1655.

⁴ Fr. Dionysius, 8.5.1645, O.C.D. 237 c.

⁵ See *English Factories in India* by Sir W. Foster.

⁶ O.C.D. 241 n.

"The Dutch for some years have been in the habit of addressing their letters to our Fathers at Basra, for dispatch by courier to their consul in Aleppo. This happens three times a year. Because of this correspondence and the services rendered good donations and alms-offerings are received at the mission, and on many occasions the Dutch show them kindnesses. . . . If they cease to do the forwarding and have a rupture with the Dutch company's agents, it may do great harm with the fresh war there is between the Dutch and Portuguese; for the Dutch are all-powerful and with one step could have us turned out of Basra, or even all Persia. What are we in conscience to do? The trade of the Portuguese at Basra has totally ceased. The 'doubt' ("dubium") is whether we can forward these letters for the Dutch . . . and it appears contrary to the Bull. . . ."

In the following year the Apostolic Commissary sent to India by the Sacr. Congregation, Fr. Joseph of S. Mary, afterwards Bishop of Hierapolis and then of Bisignano in Italy, and his companion, Fr. Vincent Mary of S. Catharine of Siena, both Carmelites, were emphatic regarding the need for the missionaries to continue on terms with the Dutch, as witness a letter of the latter Father, 20.9.1656,¹ from Gāmburun:

"We embarked" (from Basra) "on ships of the Dutch Company and received many kindnesses and attentions from them in consideration of the good relations which they enjoy with the Fathers of Persia and Basra. Certainly, if the missions are to continue in these parts, it will be very necessary to keep up these relations, otherwise it will be difficult to find passages on ships in these parts. . . ."

(They had been conveyed gratis, while other passengers had to pay 25 écus each.) What answer was given from Rome, if any, has not been noticed;² but the practice appears to have continued at Basra for many years.

Pope Alexander VII by his Brief of 18.2.1656 warmly commended Fr. Joseph of S. Mary to Shah 'Abbas II in this fashion:

"Pope Alexander VII to the illustrious and most puissant king of the Persians.

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. Such is 'Your Highness' culture that lands however distant and huge are filled with the bruit of 'your name. Unquestionably those who come thither are held to have nor soil nor father-land and not even their dwellings: So kindly do you welcome all, so generously speed their egress that, while foes abroad shrink from provoking Your valour and bravery, guests and foreigners delay naught to appeal to Your accessibility. Obviously it is the same greatness of mind that declares You fearful to Your enemies and to the seeker easy of access. And to be sure such is fact: it were in vain for man's cleverness and work to have opened for himself new ocean-ways to climes erst unknown, had the prodigious cruelty of inhospitable uncivilized countries barred every shore and place. Yet it is not so much a harbour or a bay in a calm sea as culture itself that has brought sundered tribes and nations into unity and made the trafficking by men an everyday affair. Wherefore just as nothing more useful could be given the entire race of men, so virtue which can afford so great a boon is to be carefully cherished and esteemed. But certainly there is another reason and a far stronger why We desire this to be put in use by Your Highness. For We seek not gold nor earthly things for which some are lured to travel seas and lands, but Our treasures are to spread among the nations the good news of the unsearchable

¹ O.C.D. 239 e.

² On 16.12.1656 Fr. Barnabas returned to the dilemma.

"I also desire your Reverence to give your opinion on the doubt put forward by the Vicar Provincial a year ago, i.e. whether anyone would incur excommunication or light censures according to the Bull 'Coenae,' or any other decree, for sending on the letters of the Dutch. I speak of those which concern affairs of state or the war against the Portuguese, because I am the person who was receiving all their letters which come from Europe and go to India and Persia: and it is I too who send on, untouched, their letters arriving for Europe. I do the same for the English, as they have no one here to send theirs on their way. . . ."

"riches of Christ. For truly wisdom is above choice gold; and to teach it a rough and very hard journey has been undertaken by the Religious, Brother JOSEPH of S. MARY, the "Discalced Carmelite. And so We urgently beseech Your Highness to embrace him with great kindness and zeal. Assuredly You, who entertain such friendly feelings towards "Us, are worthy to gain the greatest good. But truly You ought to be sufficiently persuaded "that You will never be sorry for kindness shown this Religious. It were easy to relate "how obedient a happiness and one that delights in its own affairs they possess whose "energies are bent on increasing and advancing the Christian religion. But even as We "desire for You a good success and one not at all unstable, so We care not much for one "that is mortal and fleeting. So meanwhile, if You help that same Religious with Your "power and influence where needed, We shall understand that the proofs of Our goodwill "and well-disposed desires have found Your Highness right well pleased. Now being "Yourself a lover of virtue You will have, firstly, why You greatly and with reason like "him which, had it not been outstanding and remarkable in him, he would never with so "great contempt of them have entrusted himself to so many dangers and also to an almost "never absent risk of death. With very great earnestness We pray for Your Highness from "God all successes and that at long last His light may beam on You.

"Given at Rome at S. Peter's under the Fisherman's ring, the 18th February 1656, "in the first year of Our Pontificate" (*vide Arch. Vat. Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 60, p. 325, formerly 305).

With that brief picture of the external influences affecting conditions in Persia¹ during the reign of 'Abbas II, such as they can be gleaned from the letters left by the Carmelites, it is convenient to pass to one particular feature of internal policy, which appears to have been quite wrongly interpreted by some European writers on the period, e.g. the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, tenth and later editions:

"'Abbas II was tolerant to all religions, always regarding Christians with especial "favour. . . ."

As already quoted, a letter of 2.3.1646² mentioned:

" . . . Things here are not going well at present for the poor Armenian and Syrian "Christians, because a new Grand Wazir has been made . . . he is a bigoted Muham-" "madan and antagonistic to Christianity. . . ."

In 1652 the Shah 'had sent to have old Julfa ruined once more' (i.e. the town on the Araxes, the former centre from which had been expelled in 1602-4 many of the Armenians settled in the new Julfa):

'and the brother of the most important Armenian of (new) Julfa had become a Muham-" "madan.'³

Writing, 12.5.1657, the same Religious makes circumstantial statements regarding the tyrannous rule of Shah 'Abbas II:

"I cannot say all, but shall only tell you that the king of Persia has thrown off the mask, "and let the venom he has in his heart be seen. He has ordered that *all the Jews in his realm* "should become Muslims, to the number of 100,000. He has ordered that the Sabaeans" (i.e. Mandaeans) "also should embrace the religion of Muhammad: and so all those at

¹ The political situation at Basra, as it touched the Carmelites, is treated at length in the section of this work dealing with the Residence at Basra, and the reader should refer to it at this point, for the situation there was full of movement at this stage.

² Fr. Dionysius, O.C.D. 237 c.

³ Fr. Barnabas, 12.10.1652, O.C.D. 241 f.

"Hawaizeh, Khalafabad, Durakh, Shushtar and Bihbihan and Zaitun, and Pul-i-Pulad "have done so.

"Now he is taking it up with the Armenians and other Christians, wanting all to apostatize. The brother of the patriarch, who was (himself) an archbishop, has voluntarily "become a renegade, and I think this poor Armenian community will in the end have to "become completely Muhammadan. . . . He does not allow them to leave the country, "and I think the Fathers will too be sent away. . . . The Pasha here" (in Basra) "has "received letters from the king of Persia exhorting him to purge his country of the 'infidels', "for so they term all those who do not follow the religion of Muhammad. . . . So they are "also in dread, the Sabaeans in particular."¹

In thus extending their zeal for Islam outside the frontiers of Persia the Shah and his ministers were evidently actuated not by mere administrative motives as regards certain sections of his subjects, but by sheer intolerance: and the evidence of this persecution does not rest on a single letter. Fr. Cornelius of S. Cyprian from Isfahan itself had already reported, 24.2.1657:²

"Affairs here are not likely to prosper our holy Faith . . . every now and then there "are disputes with the chief minister. *The Jews have been forced to become Muhammadans*, "and in order to 'purify' the city of Isfahan they are obliging all the Armenians who were "near the city to go and live outside: and there are other signs so that I do not know whether "we shall stay long in this house of ours. . . . Some 'Franks' who are married here are "leaving of their own accord and going to live near the place assigned to the Armenians, "in order not to remain in the midst of the Muslims. . . ."

In a letter of 9.7.1656³ Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns had explained the influences at work over this expulsion and the assignment of

"ground one league from the city . . . so that they may build for themselves there. The "author of this innovation is, they say, a Muhammadan 'doctor'" (i.e. a Mulla) "whom "the Shah has taken as his 'chaplain', very fanatical for his Muhammadan religion and "hostile to Christians, who are considered unclean in the eyes of Muhammadans. Nothing "so far has been notified to us about this, although they say that the Mulla in question "has set his heart on having all the European Religious also expelled from the city, and "even that the king adds that no church shall remain any longer inside the city. But we "have no definite news about this. . . ."

The same Religious added, 3.1.1657:

"Le roi a faict par force Mahométans tous les Juifs de ceste ville, et en a chassé tous "les Chrestiens Arméniens et Sirians, auxquels a faict assigner un champ en dessus de "Guilfa pour y fabriquer et i faire leur demeure. . . ."

Two years later, 4.6.1659, the Vicar Provincial, Fr. Felix of S. Antony, answered an enquiry from the Sacr. Congregation as to progress and prospects⁴ of conversions among Muslims:

"The vineyard is sterile: no credit should be given to stories of conversions. I have "found these Persians far from the truth. Lately the Shah of Persia has expelled from the

¹ This and the other contemporary evidence shows how mistaken and unreliable are Fr. du Cerceau's words and estimates of Shah 'Abbas II written a century later:

" . . . He loved justice and had no mercy for the governors and other public officers who abusing their authority "oppressed the people, of which several instances may be seen in Tavernier. He had a great and noble soul, was very "kind to strangers and openly protected the Christians, whom he would not have in the least molested for their "religion. . . ."

² O.C.D. 237 a.

³ *Idem*, 237 c.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 236, p. 24.

"city of Isfahan all Christians living there, and assigned them a place outside the city. "So your Lordship will see how far this agrees with what some persons from another Order "have spread abroad in Christendom—i.e. that this king and the greater part of his notables "could be converted. Neither do we read in history, nor in the East itself, where there "are so many apostolic missionaries from divers Orders, do we see that there have ever "been great conversions of Muhammadans. . . ."

Moreover, that iniquitous decree, or law promulgated at the end of the reign of 'Abbas I—to which the loss of countless thousands of Christians in Persia has been attributed—whereby any Christian embracing Islam was allowed to claim all the property and goods of his dead relations back to the fourth generation, to the exclusion of the other relatives and kin, was renewed in this reign: and a fanatical Wazir had much to do with this persecution, so Fr. Francis of the Passion wrote from Shiraz, 20.8.1660:¹

"Everything is done by one of his" (Abbas II's) "ministers, called 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, "who is very hostile to Catholics and Christians, whom he has expelled from Isfahan. "Armenians in Julfa and the Hebrews he has forced to become Muslims, and many of the "Armenians at the present day are becoming Muslims, especially the sons, in order to "inherit their fathers' property; because they have made an accursed law, by which all "Christians who become Muslims inherit everything. . . ."

How strongly Pope Alexander VII (Chigi) protested against this measure and took up the cudgels on behalf of Christians in general, schismatics as well as Catholics, will be read in his Brief of 21.9.1658 (see appendix for Latin text: Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.* vol. 63, p. 157, No. 114):

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace.

"Just as with more kindly affection We feel esteem for the fine gifts of Your royal mind "and particularly your zeal for uncorrupt justice and Your singular benevolence towards "Our subjects, so too have We assuredly the more sorrowfully heard how in some parts "of Your very flourishing dominions a certain custom has unknown to You crept in of "handing over to apostates from Our religion the estates of their kinsfolk, and of excluding "other nearly related Christians to their own great loss and misfortune. Now of course "this is contrary not only to upright equity and the common law of almost all nations and "races, but can also be even a great bar to the peace and weal of civil rule, since it has "been found by long use that men of this kind, who are led to change their religion by "avarice and money bribes do not even at heart cleave to that which they adopt; but "rather they disregard and despise both out of love of lucre, and indeed spurn God Himself "and His worship and heed for Him altogether, and cease to revere princes, and are ever "ready for all kinds of wicked emprises and dastard crimes.

"Since therefore popular agreement considers it certain that on first learning of such "new-fangled ways Your Highness would have gone counter to them from the beginning, "and will not let them remain longer in any way, We earnestly beg of You to grant Us, "as to a person now urgently praying and beseeching You, that boon which You yourself "once had even of Your own motion been about to vouchsafe. And We hope for it as a "certainty in view of the proved worth and reputation of Your outstanding justice and "clemency. But furthermore both Ourselves and also all Christians will freely give all "thanks and praises to Your kingly fairness and generosity, and will not cease to intercede "with Almighty God for the safety, peace and glory of Yourself and of Your vast realms. "It is for the rest among the chiefest desires of Our heart that all prosperity and happiness

¹ *S.R.*, vol 238, p. 62. This reign appears to have seen a revival of enthusiasm for the Shiah tenets and scrupulousness in practising them. Fr. Anselm of the Annunciation wrote from Basra, 5.4.1660, that "in the month of "February of that year (1659) there returned from Mecca the caravan from Persia, consisting of more than 6,000 persons "with more than 4,000 camels. . . ."



*Masagetae Cyro nocuere, Scythaque Dario.
Turca tibi nocuit, sed Scythia cessit, ABAS*

SHAH 'ABBAS II

An engraving (initialled D C.) (In the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris,
Cabinet des Estampes)

"come to Your Highness with yet greater fame and bliss, as well as a perfect recognition of Divine truth. So may God the Father of lights in His immeasurable goodness vouchsafe to grant this of His mercy.

"Given as above at S. Mary Major, Rome, under the Fisherman's ring, 21st September "1658, in the fourth year of Our Pontificate."

The survival of the communities, in large numbers as regards the Julfa folk, in very small groups as to the Jews whose association with Persia must date back to the Achaemenian period, is evidence that the harsh measures were far from being completely successful or executed; but, if all the scores of thousands of Armenians, Georgians, Circassians, Assyrians (Chaldaeans), Jews, Mandaeans and Zoroastrians, who, deprived of their own priests and places of worship, or forced by circumcision or in other ways, or married to Muslims, became absorbed unwillingly in the Shiah population, be totalled and considered, it is demonstrable that here was another strain of racial blood which has gone to make up no small portion of the Irani of today.



In such a general environment and background during the reign of 'Abbas II the limitations of the work and the actual accomplishments of the Carmelites can be better gauged. In the first few years of it they were in the throes of a domestic discord, partly due to internal and partly to political causes, over their convent at Goa, trouble which indeed had begun to make itself manifest about 1636 and hampered the unity and stunted the development of the Mission, marring the harmony of its working as a whole province and keeping several fine Religious from whole-hearted zeal for souls. The origins of the dispute have been treated at some length in the section of this work dealing separately with the foundation at Goa and elsewhere, to which the reader may turn for information: here the points at issue and incidents will not be repeated. Suffice it to note that the revolt of Portugal against Spanish domination and the eighty-year-old union with the Spanish crown, which ended in 1640 with the accession of king John IV of Portugal and the independence of his kingdom but at the cost of exhausting hostilities with Spain lasting 28 years, had its counterpart in a strong nationalist spirit permeating the Portuguese Indies. Pressure by Spain led to the Sovereign Pontiffs declining to recognize the new monarch with, as one result, ecclesiastical discipline becoming relaxed as see after see fell vacant and remained so. The original and none too willing assent of the Order to the founding of a Carmelite convent in the capital of the Portuguese Indies had been based on the hope that this centre of Catholic generosity would provide both a supply of novices suitable for service in various posts of the Persian mission, and also funds to keep up the Houses in Persia itself: from the first days there had been considerable numbers of aspirants of Portuguese race admitted to the convent, and a second house bequeathed to the Mission was turned into a seminary for a time. Infected by the nationalist spirit certain Carmelites at Goa, men of ability, of Portuguese birth trained in the Order in Rome began an agitation for the exclusion from the convent of foreign Religious, particularly Italians (perhaps in resentment of the attitude taken up by the Holy See towards king John IV from 1640 onwards). Such an attitude found favour with and was exploited by several of the viceroys, their councils, and influential men in Goa: there had been for more than thirty years a general suspicion of foreign Religious by the Portuguese authorities in India owing to other grounds: and (it must be added) certain non-Portuguese Carmelites of standing sympathized with and supported the demand for separation of the Houses in Portuguese India from control by the Congregation of Italy and the Vicar Provincial in Isfahan. So, when Portuguese Fathers from the convent of Goa in 1640 returned to Portugal, had an audience of king John IV and represented to

him their grievances, he desired the semi-official representative of the Vatican in Lisbon to take action:¹ the Vice-Collector General of His Holiness for Portugal (that was his style) accordingly appointed as Apostolic Visitor General with extensive powers a Carmelite of the province of Portugal, and dispatched him to the East. Among the first moves of this Visitor General, Fr. John of Christ, was the founding of new 'missions' in a number of places in India without the consent of and contrary to the policy of the Definitory General in Rome; and in a short time he had given the habit to some 45 novices, without sufficient care about their qualifications—while in the convent itself, the noviciate house and the other Carmelite posts in India (Diu and Tatta) conflict arose between two parties, the one nationalist, the other holding to the connection with the Congregation of Italy. The Vicar Provincial of the time, an Italian, together with a number of other Religious, was sent away from Goa by the malcontents, Visitors General from Italy were openly resisted.

In Rome the Definitory General of the Order protested to the Sacr. Congregation in due course, the Cardinal Prefect directed the Pope's representative in Lisbon to revoke his commission to the Apostolic Visitor, Fr. John of Christ who, when apprised, had to return to Portugal with some leaders of the separatist movement. But that was in 1646, when the movement had been already ten years at work in the convent at Goa, disturbing the unity of the Carmelites.

Succinctly, as the sequel to all this, the mission posts in Persia lost the financial aid anticipated from Goa—Religious were not recruited there for service at the Residences in Persia—and the Carmelites in Persia itself after the distressing experiences had a revulsion of sentiment, which led them to welcome the gradual reduction of numbers in the convent of Goa to eight (by 1656):

"May God never permit again that they increase. . . ."²

But the bias among Portuguese in India against control from outside and non-Portuguese Religious was to last on³ through the centuries—it may be traced in the 'Padroado' question of quite recent times.

With this cutting off of the source of funds, on which they had principally relied, the Carmelites at Isfahan found difficulty in maintaining and providing for the needs of a sufficient number of Religious at the convent:

"We are in great straits, having repaid (on 16.7.1644) a loan of 160 Tumans and interest "outstanding."⁴

In addition at the beginning of the following October the Fathers

"reimbursed a French merchant, by name Jean Tavernier,⁵ with whom we had come to

¹ See his letter of 29.7.1644 in O.C.D. 236 b.

² Fr. Barnabas, 4.8.1653, O.C.D. 241 f.

³ For example, "31.6.1650. . . . The king of Portugal is still objecting to foreigners being in that mission. . . .": "16.8.1654. . . . The Augustinian Fathers . . . say that strict orders have been given by the new viceroy, Branco de Castro, prohibiting any foreign Religious from living in India. . . . Please give us news how the war between Portugal and Spain is going. . . .": "30.12.1654. . . . I take note of the instructions that no Padres are to be sent from Persia to Goa. . . .": "20.3.1656. . . . The prohibition on the entry of foreign Religious by the king of Portugal is still in vigour. . . ." (letters of Fr. Felix).

By Brief of 9.10.1717 the (Carmelite) Vicar Apostolic in the Mogul's dominions having been authorized for 7 years to ordain for the service of the missions in India natives of other dioceses, and the Archbishop of Goa having been warned of this by direct communication from the Pope, the matter was notified by the viceroy to the king of Portugal who caused an edict to be published, by which anyone in Portuguese India (or Bombay-British) ordained by any prelate other than the Archbishop of Goa would be exiled with all his relatives from all Portuguese territory, and all their property there confiscated; while no bishop would be recognized unless his Bulls of appointment were presented for registration in the Chancery at Lisbon, "the king of Portugal giving out in all parts that he was absolute patron of the missions in the East" (*vide Acta of Sacr. Congreg. for 1720, p. 471*).

⁴ Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, 13.7.1645 and 8.5.1645, O.C.D. 237 f.

⁵ The author of *Voyages de Perse*, on his first journey, had stayed with the Carmelites at Basra in 1639, and, on his second, 15.3.1652.

"terms for this, the whole sum of 106 Tumans and to do this pledging all we had in the House, selling off furniture for the past two years, to meet expenses. . . ."¹

In 1645, however, a lay brother who had been dispatched to Mozambique to collect alms-offerings from the Portuguese returned to Persia with a "useful sum of money . . .", and the position appears to have gradually improved. While in Italy as Procurator from the Missions in 1649 Fr. Felix had tried to collect donations and

"alms from the city of my native province, Naples, but I found the city so exhausted by the past disturbances, that the noblest and richest receivers of income are now the poorest and most necessitous. . . ."²

In 1654 the missionary province held "in Goa credits for 1,400 scudi, in Basra 700 scudi, and another good sum in Isfahan". Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, 10.7.1657,³ was even gratified:

". . . The Lord has provided this mission of ours from various quarters, so that I think that not many times has it been better provided (with funds) than at present. . . ."

Before that, 3.9.1654, the new Vicar Provincial, Fr. Felix, had represented to the Order in Rome that, if the Definitory General would remit to him in a lump sum 3,000-4,000 Roman scudi (instead of about 1,000 scudi every three years), he would invest it; and the interest on that, and on alms and grants previously saved, should prove sufficient to finance the whole mission: at that time he wrote that about 500 scudi annually were required by the whole missionary province, a figure he changed to 1,000 in a letter of 21.6.1655. With the same idea, after a visitation of the convent at Isfahan, he gave instructions for all alms-offerings at the several mission-posts and all subsidies, allotments or grants from Rome to be common to the whole Mission and distributed by the Vicar Provincial, according to his views of necessity.⁴

The Definitory General did not act on the former suggestion, and the other conventual Fathers in Persia disliked the latter, which was put into effect by Fr. Felix, the more so as his placing out of the accumulated funds at interest resulted in disastrous losses through bankruptcies of Hindu⁵ and Muslim money-dealers—as may be read in more detail in the section of this work dealing with the financing of the Mission: and it became impoverished for a number of years.

In another direction the individualist financial control and methods of this Vicar Provincial distressed the conventuals, viz. in regard to the Residence at Shiraz, to which a brief allusion is here needed to illustrate the general conduct of the Mission during this reign, although for a detailed account of the Residence at Shiraz the reader is referred to the special section dealing with it. In 1645:

"for more than a year past the House at Shiraz had not been inhabited and is entrusted to an Armenian."⁶

The Fathers felt unable to meet the expense of repairs, estimated to require 2,800 piastres = 9,800 'abbasi.⁷ Besides,

"every autumn all the sick are wont to be dumped there:⁸ the expenditure there is large,

¹ Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, 7.3.1646.

² This was after the popular rising against the Spanish viceroy led by Masaniello to demand the privileges granted by Charles V, which led to much bloodshed between 7.7.1647 and 3.4.1648.

³ O.C.D. 237 f.

⁴ It is remarkable that in the Safawi period Hindus were established in business at Isfahan and Shiraz—this was not the case 250 years later.

⁵ Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, 8.5.1645, O.C.D. 237 f.

⁶ Compare *English Factories in India*, 25.1.1661. Agent Buckeridge to the East India Company from Gāmbnun:

"By reason of the sickness and mortalitie of all your factors in Persia. . . . Mr Samways arrived at Shiraz thogh sick and weake, soe that I was forced to leave him there with the Padrys Carmeleets, by whose care hee was recovered, but fell again into a relapse by eating of fruit and dyed there the 31st of August."

⁷ O.C.D. 236 b., 11.7.1646.

"because of the frequency of guests, who, as Shiraz is on the road from India, the Persian ports and Basra, are in the habit of seeking hospitality. . . . While there is not a single Catholic in all Shiraz and no Christians, save four or five Armenians, who go there to sell cloth and make wine, leaving their families in Isfahan. . . ." ¹

Part of the buildings, and the large garden with pomegranate-trees on the outskirts of the town on the road to Lar had already been sold to meet debts and expenses when, returning to the East in the capacity of Visitor General, from Baghdad, 3.11.1646, Fr. Stephen of Jesus wrote that in his opinion:

" . . . it is necessary to found a House in Baghdad for . . . the good of souls and . . .
 "I have ordered Isfahan to sell the rest of the House of Shiraz and let the proceeds,
 "together with the fittings of that House, remain in deposit, destined for the founding at
 "Baghdad. . . ."

From Rome the Praepositus General had disapproved of the abandonment of the Residence at Shiraz: and, after his arrival in Isfahan, 28.5.1649, the new Vicar Provincial, Fr. Dominic of S. Nicolas, replied:

" . . . Before I arrived, by order of the Fr. Visitor, Shiraz had already in fact been
 "abandoned, the furniture taken elsewhere, nor did there remain anything except the
 "dwelling-house, with a small cottage and courtyard. The large garden with the other
 "buildings had previously been sold . . . all that it is possible to do now is to retain and
 "preserve the church. . . ." ²

During the years 1644-54 the house at Shiraz had had no resident Carmelite Father, but once Fr. Felix of S. Antony had succeeded as Vicar Provincial in 1654 his predilections led him to reside in Shiraz (perhaps inspired with the sentiment of thus at any rate preserving the Residence) rather than at Isfahan. (At that time, there were only two families of 'Frank' Christians resident in the capital of Fars: ³ at Basra only three Christian households.)

But in 1656, unheeding of the affection of the other Religious for the traditions and associations of the old premises, this Vicar Provincial sold what remained of those acquired in 1623, and paid for so painfully, for some 8 or 9 Tumans: ⁴ he built another Residence near the garden of the Khan, which was destined to be occupied continuously by the Fathers for some 80 years.

In more ways than one this reign was a restless period for the Carmelite Mission, and full of contrarities; but perhaps the most unsettling factor of all was a Bull of Pope Alexander VII regarding the control of the missions. The Vicar Provincial wrote: ⁵

"I have heard that by a Brief of the Pope dispatched in September 1655 both the temporal and spiritual control of the missions has passed out of the hands of the Order into that of the Sac. Congregation (de Propaganda Fide): and this has afflicted us all greatly
 " . . . it is as if a son, who loved his father tenderly and desired to remain to be brought
 "up by him, had been suddenly deprived of him. The Fathers are much disturbed at the
 "thought that the Sac. Congregation may dally in dealing with affairs and not know
 "the individuals it sends out" (to the missions). "They are thinking of returning to their
 "provinces. . . ."

The Carmelites in Persia had first been warned of this by the former Vicar Provincial and Visitor General (1635-42), Fr. James of S. Teresa:

"We have received a circular letter, dated 21.2.1656, from Fr. James, written to all missionaries here, in which on behalf of our Fr. General he let it be known to all that

¹ Fr. Dionysius, 8.5.1645, O.C.D. 237 c.

² O.C.D. 237 c.

³ Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, 27.3.1654, O.C.D. 242 c

⁴ *Idem*, 3.1.1657, O.C.D. 237 c.

⁵ Fr. Felix, 24.10.1656, O.C.D. 237 i.

"the administration of our missions is no longer in the hands of our Order—and from that time we have received not a line from them. . . . Though it is two years since the Pope's Brief was issued up till now no letter from the Sacr. Congregation has come. . . ."¹

Two main considerations troubled their minds and consciences. The first was only natural—the fatherly relationship between their General and each of them, the brotherhood and sympathy in needs between those in Europe and those on the mission, the letters of sympathetic understanding² which passed between Persia and the Order in Rome, particularly when the Praepositus General happened himself to be a former missionary, in fine the reliance they could place on their spiritual and material wants receiving attention—how different it would be when they were cut off from all that, and had to deal with impersonal, unknown dignitaries and secretaries, who would have no personal interest in their work, their troubles!

"The missionaries have all written to our General pressing to be allowed to return, as they do not wish to live separated from obedience to their superiors. . . ."³

"J'ay supplié nostre Père General de m'envoyer mes patentes . . . et m'ayder à me remettre entre les bras de ma bonne mère, la Religion, et m'oster de ceux d'une marastre."⁴

"We here do not know how we are to live, and whose subjects we are to be. As to myself, rather than serve directly under the Sacr. Congregation I should prefer to return. . . ."⁵

are examples of their sentiments, and there are others extant.

The second point concerned in part the bequest of Baron Cimini di Cacurri, by which the Mission to Persia was endowed, the income from which, however, seems to have reached the missionaries irregularly, and to have never sufficed for annual expenditure: and quite untrusting they anticipated that they might be left without funds:

"I think it certain that, if these revenues of ours are placed in the hands of priests, our Fathers will die of starvation, and we shall have to abandon the Mission. . . ."⁶

"We are sure that the Sacr. Congregation will never look after us with the same solicitude love and liberality, as up till now we have always been cared for by our superiors . . . with the taking away of that of which we have hitherto been possessed so legitimately and had distributed to us so wisely our ruin will ensue . . . to depend in material matters as well as in spiritual matters on the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide, that cannot be, because we know that we should soon die of hunger. . . ."⁷

Before 25.2.1658 reassuring news had evidently reached the Carmelites in Persia, for the same Religious was writing to a Definitor General:

"I shall hope they will continue to improve: we do not believe that our lord Pope Alexander VII . . . will take away from a very poor Order a revenue possessed so legitimately for so many years, and so piously distributed in supplying with victuals seven Residences in an infidel country. . . ."

Finally, by June of that year instructions had come from the Order of such a tenor that all remained tranquilly at their posts.

In the section of this work summarizing the data regarding the financing of the Mission throughout its history more will be found as to the change of control, which does not, to the

¹ Fr. Felix, 12.5.1657, O.C.D. 238 p.

² True that at times the missionaries complained of being neglected: e.g. "It is just on 2 years that there has been no letter from the Order: no reply from the Praepositus General except two or three from the Procurator" (Fr. Stephen, 26.11.1651).

³ Fr. Dionysius, 20.11.1656.

⁴ Fr. Cornelius, 24.2.1657, O.C.D. 237 a.

⁵ Fr. Casimir Joseph, 16.10.1650, O.C.D. 241 h.

⁶ Fr. Barnabas, 20.7.1656, O.C.D. 241 f.

⁷ *Idem*, 16.12.1656.

reader, seem to have taken appreciable effect for twenty years or more. But to it, eventually, may perhaps be attributed in part the great reduction in the number of letters from missionaries on record in the archives of the Order—no longer directly responsible for their direction and needs, the Curia of the Order may have ceased to keep up a regular correspondence from their side, while meeting with no response the missionaries may have refrained from writing.

The difficulties which confronted the Mission as a whole and prevented it from progress in evangelization were indeed multiple—not only with latent Shiah fanaticism, or in internal discipline and financial administration. Successive Vicars Provincial of this period were the victims of misfortune. In 1641 Fr. Dominic of Christ, setting off from a sense of duty to deal with the situation in Goa, perished from the results of a heat-stroke near Shiraz. In 1646 Fr. Dominic of S. Mary had been expelled from Goa by the intruding Visitor from Portugal, and infirmities immobilized him in Isfahan for nearly all the rest of his life. The next appointment, Fr. Augustine of S. Teresa, setting out from Rome in 1646, was captured by the Barbary corsairs and remained a slave, first at Algiers, afterwards being re-sold to Moors at Tunis, where he was treated very harshly and threatened continually with greater cruelty, if he did not secure exchange with a certain Tunisian Muslim, held by the Knights in Malta.¹ His letters, a number of which safely reached Rome—in one he remarked that “vessels from “Leghorn, Genoa, from Naples, Sicily and Malta used to call at Tunis”, so that relations between the corsairs’ ports and Europe were not closed—give pitiful descriptions of the misery of the unransomed Christian captives. He had had teeth knocked out, and ‘the beatings he ‘had had made him the colour of his habit’.² A fourth Vicar Provincial, after spending only a few months at his headquarters, Fr. Dominic of S. Nicolas, left Goa suddenly in January 1654 in somewhat strange circumstances—some said deported—on the same ship as took the viceroys Conde de Obbidos, who had been expelled after a rising in Goa: and when the ship reached the Azores Fr. Dominic was put ashore and died of an infectious disease caught when consoling another sick and bereaved person on board.³

If in the whole province of the Mission—two Convents and four Residences—there were 24 Religious in 1655,⁴ and at the convent in Isfahan alone 9 Religious in 1650 (when three more were on the way from Europe),⁵ eight Religious in 1651, three of these already by 1645 were “so infirm that they are unable to leave the House”,⁶ and on 15.11.1651 Fr. Felix lamented:

“This House at Isfahan has become an infirmary: no mission work is done except by “Fr. Dionysius who sees to baptizing moribund infants,”

and he went on that

¹ The Order had ransomed one of his companions for 50 scudi, but was poor, and the release of the others had to suit Tunisian demands. *vide* Fr. Felix, 6.11.1649, *S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 279.

² O.C.D. 270 m, 14.6.1649. In another letter Fr. Augustine alludes to a strange figure in the royal family of Spain: “a fearful event which occurred some days ago, here in Tunis. From Malaga there has arrived Don Philip of Austria, . . . and he has turned ‘Turk’ a second time, and he, who was called ‘Don Philip of Austria’, is now named ‘Sidi ‘Muhammad’. He went on board in Malaga, saying that he intended to cross to Rome for the Holy Year in an “English vessel, which pretended to proceed to Leghorn, but bore away for Tunis: the first vessel, on which he had gone “on board, feigning to be making much water, went off, leaving all its passengers on the other vessel (also English) “which was going to Leghorn. Don Philip remained hidden for 10 days till that vessel had gone off, and then wrote “secretly to the Dey of Tunis to come and fetch him, and then he went ashore by a stratagem . . . when he arrived he “put on his former ‘Turkish’ clothes. He took with him some of his familiars and a concubine, and the latter’s mother . . . Don Philip has caused a great storm, because the chief people wanted to burn him, saying that he had tricked the “‘Turks’ ” (before) “and the Christians. Some of the Turks praised him, others blamed him. He is now going about “so sadly and melancholy—as it seems to me, like another Cain. Some say he had a hand in this: others that there had “been treachery by the English . . . and that the English captain, who did this, received 5,000 pieces of eight . . .” Curiously enough, Fr. Augustine added that among the persons landed at Tunis with this prince were “two of our “Fathers from Spain, whom he (the prince) had taken as his chaplains, i.e. Fr. Antonio de Jesus, prior of Malaga, and “another priest, his companion. It was said that all of them had come to become Muslims, but this was false: I had “a talk with the said Fr. Prior who . . . told me that he wanted to go and salute your Reverence . . .” (i.e. in Rome, so presumably the party had a definite intention of making the Holy Year visit).

³ Letter of Dr. L. Murz, S.J., 31.8.1654, O.C.D. 270 m.

⁵ *Idem*, 31.1.1650, O.C.D. 237 i.

⁴ Fr. Felix, 20.2.1655, O.C.D. 237 i.

⁶ Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, 13.7.1645.

"owing to the Visitor General, Fr. Stephen, saying that our Superiors recommend the 'Observance' (being followed), mission work has been completely abandoned. He has 'reduced it to an enclosure of monks, in which there is no missionary activity at all. . . ."

Outside of Isfahan such a stricture was no longer applicable after 1652, at any rate: and that those Religious, who were in health, were not idle can be perceived from the remarks by the Visitor General, 18.11.1650:

"I have set Fr. Balthazar of S. Mary, with the aid of Fr. Peter of the Mother of God, 'to translate the sacred Gospels'"

(unaware, no doubt, that this had been done already by Fr. John Thaddeus more than 30 years previously): and by 1653

"Fr. Peter of the Mother of God has translated into Persian more than 70 chapters of 'S. Thomas 'Contra Gentes'. . . ."

Further, the formidable task that the Carmelites had set themselves in the linguistic field by their choice of stations needs to be emphasized and must largely account for the failure of all the other Orders represented in the area, as well as themselves, to make more headway. 'Turki' (not Osmanli Turkish) was the language of the Court and widely used at Isfahan and in the north: *Persian* the language of the people and at Shiraz: *Armenian* was required to teach the inhabitants of Julfa: *Arabic* for the Residence at Basra, and with Syrians: if a Religious were transferred to India, or to Basra, he needed more than a small facility for *Portuguese*, not to mention one or more of the Indian tongues. That was not all: to communicate with Chaldaean Syriac was necessary, the Mandaeans of Mesopotamia had a tongue of their own. Religious who were French, Flemish or Spanish by birth needed Italian for conversation and correspondence with their brethren. Not every missionary, even those trained in modern seminaries and colleges, is a born linguist: few could do expert apologetic or translation work, or preach usefully in even two of such difficult oriental languages, in addition to their own. With these Carmelites of the seventeenth century the only possible method of giving them a profound or even thorough knowledge of a pair of those languages, Armenian and Persian, Turkish and Armenian, and that they could know the oriental classics, the Quran, and be able to express themselves accurately in theological argument and preaching, would have been by keeping a Religious to one mission post or area and linguistic environment over five to ten years' deep application to study, and from oriental teachers. But in the Persian mission, every three or four years or less, exigencies seemed to require the transfer of nearly every one of the Religious to a distant post with a fresh language problem; and the possibility of keeping up tongues previously studied must have been small. Some of the Religious were well aware of the deficiency (particularly when Vicars Provincial were appointed fresh from Europe):

"To" (try to) "look after the missions without knowing the language is a manifest self-deception: the experience of many years demonstrates that to us. When Fr. John Thaddeus and Fr. Dimas of the Cross ruled the missions, they knew the language and put 'their hands to the plough, the seed was sown and harvest reaped.'" (He referred to conversions of Persians and Armenians by these Fathers.) "Some hamlets of Catholic 'Armenians¹ converted by Fr. Dimas" (i.e. before 1623) "sent for our Fathers to administer 'the Sacraments to them, as Fr. Dimas had done, asserting that they were Catholics and 'did not want schismatic priests. The (Carmelite) Fathers paid not the least attention—

¹ The hamlets seem to have been "in a district called Piria about 4 days' journey from Isfahan, where there are many 'Armenian villages, in which Fr. Dimas used to work: and among them there are some Georgians, who at a distance from 'their own race and never visited by their schismatic priests have errors in baptism, etc.'" (*vide* Fr Dionysius, 15.5.1655). (There were still, 1935, Armenian villages in Piria, reported the Superior of the Catholic mission).

"there was not one ready to go—till in the end, seeing the lack of zeal, the Capuchin Fathers
 "asked permission of our Provincial and went to do the work, although that mission field
 "had been of our creation."¹

When in authority the energetic Fr. Felix put those principles into practice:

"Our Father Vicar" (Provincial) "has ordered me to apply myself to the Turkish language, which is the most common almost in the East, and is current not only in Turkey, but also in this kingdom. It is the commonest language, and the most esteemed at the Court of the king. . . . I find little opportunity here to practise the languages I had learnt in Europe, even Flemish" (his own). "For even were I posted at Basra, the Dutch are only there two months in the year, for the rest of the time there is no one; and here" (in Isfahan) "they have 4 or 5 Factors, whom one rarely meets. . . ."²

and again:

"Fr. Cornelius is making great progress in Armenian,"³

and, as regards Fr. Stephen, a much older man, he

"is now working at Armenian . . . learning it with much toil. . . ."⁴

In 1653 from the port of Basra, where European ships would lie in the Shatt during the monsoon, Fr. Barnabas wrote:⁵

"The Fr. Vicar writes that they want to provide this Residence with some young men, but let him arrange that they shall have a knowledge of Dutch or English, because those nations are much our friends, and there are Catholics among them . . ."

while from Bandar Rig two years later the Vicar Provincial himself asked Rome for

"four good and young missionaries, of good temperament: and, if there were an Irishman among them knowing the English language, it would be excellent. . . ."⁶

As evidence that the Carmelites (and other Orders too) in the reign of 'Abbas II were far from idle (even if for certain periods infirmities and contrarities in some cases kept them from the degree of activity they themselves would have desired) one might cite their 'campaign' over the Armenians of Julfa: and that was only one of several similar essays. This reign, indeed, was more fruitful of initiative than any other for the Persian mission—Armenians, Chaldaeans, Mandaean, Assyrians in the Mosul district, moribund Shiah children, all were objects of enthusiastic evangelizing enterprise. Some of the band of Carmelites between 1645–60 had dynamic or forceful personalities, clamouring to find souls to whom to teach the Faith or to rid of schism and error: when disappointed, pressing Rome to allow them to go to Japan, where persecution had broken out, or to work among the Georgians and other Orthodox. But the impression made is that there was little coherent effort, no concentration by all Religious on one particular objective at a time and on stopping to till that field collectively over a period of years: one or more of the Fathers would wax enthusiastic over a fresh community to be brought into union with Rome, and then the proposal was left for something else.

¹ Yet, 26.11.1651, O.C.D. 238 e., Fr. Stephen claimed that the previous year he himself had been to "Fr. Dimas' mission, to see how help could be given the Armenians there, many families of Catholics descended from those from Alingia."

² Fr. Casimir Joseph, 16.1.1655, O.C.D. 236 l.

³ Fr. Felix, 20.6.1654, O.C.D. 237 i. These young priests were shortly after sent to Basra and Goa, where Armenian was useless.

⁴ Fr. Balthazar, 4.12.1653.

⁵ 4.8.1653, O.C.D. 241 f.

⁶ 21.6.1655, O.C.D. 241 k.

To take first the attempted foundation in Julfa, where the policy of the Carmelites, hitherto based on conciliation and negotiation for union, entered on a radical change of method. The increased traffic to, and temporary residence of Armenian traders in Italy and other European countries, including Poland—a feature which had sprung up in the previous twenty years or so and was unknown before that—had its detrimental side: Fr. Paul Piromalli, O.P., afterwards Archbishop of Nakhchiwan and widely famed as Bishop of Bisignano and of Città di Castello, then one of the Dominican missionaries in Nakhchiwan, wrote from Isfahan to the Sacr. Congregation, 5.4.1644:¹

“The Armenians of Isfahan, and in particular those who return from Europe, are the ‘most opposed to union and the most mordant in turning the people from the devotion ‘they have for Rome . . .’

and almost on the same date, 3.4.1644, an Augustinian, Fr. Joseph de Rosario, from Isfahan was notifying the Sacr. Congregation:²

“We constantly suffer persecution from the Armenians, on account of which the removal ‘of all missionaries from these parts is to be foreseen. If against those who dwell without ‘hindrance in the lands of Catholic sovereigns it were threatened, and by some demonstration made clear to them, that the Catholic sovereigns would take ill any molestation ‘caused us, perhaps we should be freed (from it). . . .’

The Carmelite Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns had already proposed, 7.11.1643,³ to the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation action in Europe as one way to stay this malice—here were the Armenian traders enjoying many advantages in Catholic countries of Europe, and enriching themselves and returning to Julfa to bite the hands which had fed them:

“Many of the principal men there (Julfa) desire us to go there, and they recognize readily ‘every truth of the Catholic Faith: and they are discontented with their schismatic bishop ‘and priests. Now the difficulty is . . . these poor Armenians are subjected to the power ‘of Persians and, were any one of them opposed to it to go and accuse the others to the Shah’s ‘officials, saying that they wanted to bring ‘Franks’ into this place—Julfa—those officials ‘would spoil and upset everything,⁴ and the Armenians in question would besides be condemned to pay large fines and penalties, so that the richer men are the most timorous.

“I proposed in my last letter to you, as one way out of this, that as these Armenians ‘trade largely in Venice, Leghorn, Marseilles—were the Sacr. Congregation to choose a good ‘representative, and were he to arrange with the Duke of Florence, the Signory at Venice ‘(or, if the king of France would be so graciously pleased) to appoint someone as their ‘resident Agent in Julfa and write to the king of Persia to assign a place there for the ‘Agent, and also write to Khwajeh Paulus, the richest and most influential man in the ‘Armenian community, in favour of the missionary in question (who best might have the ‘name of ‘Agent’), it seems to me that in this way a place could be obtained in Julfa without ‘any other difficulty: from such (procedure) the Armenians promise us much benefit and ‘profit to souls. . . . I also tell your Lordship that the church of the Jacobites is now vacant ‘by the death of Rabban Elias: if there were any missionary here knowing the Arabic ‘language, this church could easily be taken over by the Catholics. . . .’

Almost identical language occurs in yet a third letter, addressed to the Praepositus General of the Order, 8.5.1645.⁵ It will be seen in the sequel of a whole hundred years and more how

¹ S.R., vol. 62, p. 257 *et seq.*

² *Idem.*, p. 223.

³ *Idem.*, p. 214; *idem.*, p. 204, 20.6.1644.

⁴ There is in almost similar terms a letter dated 20.6.1644 (S.R., vol. 62, p. 204) where he used the expression, “To ‘become a Catholic is here called by no other name than to become a ‘Frank’ (*Farangi*)”, which reveals much of the bias confronting any missionary in that part of the world.

⁵ O.C.D. 237 c.

fiercely the schismatics resented the intrusion of Latins, and Latin proselytizers in particular, into their stronghold, how they fought the 'Uniat' community which gradually grew in their midst. Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns appears to have been the original person to urge this step: how far it was a mistake in tactics for the objective of promoting concord leading to reunion to provoke a lasting bitterness and acerbity, which otherwise might have been avoided, is a moot point. To those representations of his probably it was due that:

"at the end of 1645 the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide decreed the establishment of a mission at Julfa by the Carmelites: the request of the Carmelite Order was signed 18.12.1645. It was considered necessary that the Pope should write a Brief recommending them to the Shah. This had been done, 16.1.1645-6, and approved by the Pope, but "apparently was not dispatched,"

according to the MSS. *Hist. Miss.*¹

On 15.11.1646 was recorded² an event which was to influence greatly the future of church affairs in Julfa: two Augustinian Fathers testified to a certain Khwajeh 'Sahrat' of Julfa having made a profession of the Catholic Faith. This was, no doubt, the 'Sarrat', parent and grand-parent of the numerous 'Sarratis', or Sharimanis, as they were also termed, the rich merchants subsequently on the one hand settled at Leghorn and Venice, and providers of a considerable endowment for the Mechitarist monastery in the latter city, and on the other hand the nucleus and main supporters of the Latin bishops and Uniat communities in Julfa.

Mentioning that he had recently received a letter from Fr. James (of S. Teresa) in Rome regarding the 'mission' to the Armenians of Julfa adumbrated, the Vicar Provincial wrote from Isfahan to the Praepositus General, 12.7.1646,³ explaining that permission from the Shah to establish themselves in Julfa would be required:

"We are trying to have a permit from the king or, as it were, his order to the Armenians "to give us a place. . . . Because, if it be known that the king is willing to give us the permit "in question, there will be many and powerful efforts made to oppose it: this would have "been the case had the head of the Julfa people been the one of the last few years, and all "the more now he is so no longer for some months past, but the former man, his predecessor, "son of the head in your Reverence's time. . . ." ⁴

The cautious Fr. Dominic of S. Mary proceeded to speak of one characteristic of the Armenian race—even if a licence to found a House were obtained from the Shah, he could not predict the result, because

"each one of them seeks to further his own private interests and all, or almost all, to work "for the preservation of their own rite and race: and, if in past years there was something "like a beginning of a disposition in the matter of religion, it is altogether or almost entirely "dispersed or ended, and what there was appears to have been caused more by other "dissensions in matters of their private interests, than from any real disillusionment on "points of their creed. . . ."

He added the information that Fr. Paul Piromalli, the Dominican of the diocese of Nakhchivan, was then staying in the Carmelite convent as a guest (on 18.8.1645 he had been in Tabriz, for there is a letter in *S.R.*, vol. 65, from him). This Dominican, possessing an excellent practical knowledge of Armenian and well acquainted with their liturgy and writings and history, considered that much more downright and outspoken methods should be employed to overcome the schism, and consistently he put his opinion into practice, to the embarrassment and perhaps alarm of the other Religious in Isfahan, e.g. the French Capuchin, Fr. Valentin of Angers, in

¹ Chap 12, book 9.

² *S.R.*, vol. 65, p. 330

³ Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, O.C.D. 237 f

⁴ This Praepositus General was Fr. Eugenius of S. Benedict, elected 16.4.1644, who in 1625 had been at Isfahan.

letter of 4.9.1647¹ complained to the Sacr. Congregation of the "violence of Fr. Paul Piromalli, O.P., with the Armenians of Julfa": and the Carmelite Provincial, Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, 7.3.1646,² wrote that:

"Fr. Paul Piromalli, O.P., is preaching in the streets and 'maidans' of Julfa on the errors "of the Armenians—this style, unsuitable at present, is resented by them, and uncalled "for. . . ."

n 1649

"continual conferences, which the missionaries had, produced a good effect: one Armenian " 'bishop' and one curate being followed into the church by several of the people. . . ."

On the other hand, outside Isfahan, in the district of Ganduman,⁴ an attempt by Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns to convert certain Armenians deserted by their own pastors proved vain: they were in a deplorable state of neglect.⁵ All the Orders then at Isfahan seem to have vied with each other in trying to penetrate the seclusion of the Armenian town—the Augustinian Prior was at that time 'episcopal vicar' on behalf of Bishop Bernard: and so in 1650 it is noted:⁶

"The Armenian ecclesiastics have prohibited the Augustinian Fathers from going any "more to officiate in the church of some poor Syrians, to which for two years past they had "been wont to go on Sundays to say Mass. It does not seem that the Armenian ecclesiastics "are too well disposed towards 'Frank' Fathers; but they are ill pleased that a Fr. Paul, a "Dominican" (i.e. Piromalli), "jousts with them on controversial matters in writing⁷ and "in disputations before the populace. . . ."

By 1651 matters must have been arranged for:

"10.7.1651. The Fathers at Isfahan write that they want to *buy* a house in Julfa"⁹
and on 5.10.1651 from Isfahan Fr. Felix remarked:

"we are waiting for our Fr. Vicar Provincial" (he was still at Goa) "to inaugurate the new "foundation at Julfa. . . ."¹⁰

The Order in Rome had authorized it (at least tentatively):

"4.12.1651. Two foundations have been accepted—at Julfa and Kung—the former is "working, but will be very difficult, and with small hope of results. . . ."¹¹

¹ S.R., vol. 65, pp. 332-3.

² O.C.D. 237 f.

³ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 25, book 8.

⁴ Ganduman is still (1935) a district with Armenian villages, according to a statement by the Superior of the Mission.

⁵ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 36, book 8.

⁶ Fr. Dominic of S. Mary, 21.3.1650, O.C.D. 237 f.

⁷ Not only against the Armenian errors, but also Persian Shiah tenets did this militant missionary not fear to issue his challenge:

"Fr. Paul Piromalli, the Dominican, has composed in the Persian tongue a book: *On the Trinity* and another *On the "Incarnation*, which caused much commotion among their learned men, the 'Ulama', who have admitted that the "Incarnation of the Word' was not impossible, and that there might be such a thing as the 'Trinity'—a thing the "Muhammadans had never been willing to grant. . . ." (*vide* Fr. Barnabas, Basra, 12.10.1652, O.C.D. 241 f.).

⁸ But early in 1653 Fr. Piromalli must have left Persia, for he was made captive by the corsairs of Tunis, 8.4.1653, when returning to Rome, and for 10 months languished in the *bagne*, and while in slavery was nominated for succession to the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan (*vide* S.R., vol. 292, p. 334). In this connection may be quoted from *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5, of Fr. L. Lemmens the 'proceedings' of the session of the Sacr. Cong., 2.6.1654:

" . . . letters . . . that the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan had departed this life, and so the diocese should be provided "with another shepherd . . . their Eminences . . . voted that there should be proposed to His Holiness for the said "diocese Fr. Paul Piromalli . . . a missionary of long standing in Persia, who knows very well the Armenian, Turkish, "Persian and Arabic languages, and recently underwent captivity in the hands of the 'Turks' on a voyage, while returning "from Persia to Rome to inform the Sacr. Cong. about the state and progress of his Order and mission. . . ."

⁹ Fr. Barnabas, O.C.D. 241 f.

¹⁰ O.C.D. 237 i.

¹¹ Fr. Stephen, O.C.D. 238 c.

The Carmelites were first admitted to Julfa

"at a time when some small present of a curiosity had been made to the Head of the Armenians, and when the latter had need of a recommendation in order to obtain the release of three Armenians from the galleys at Venice . . ."

explained Fr. Felix in a letter of 20.12.1655.¹

Fr. Balthazar of S. Mary gives the story² of the early experience of opposition:

"Our Fathers began the Residence at Julfa on Sunday in the Octave of Corpus Christi" (= 15th June 1652). "At the first they were well received and welcomed by the principal men, who showed them many kindnesses. Fifteen days after the new Residence" (was started) "there arrived in Isfahan the Reverend Fathers of the Society of Jesus. . . . Two or three days after their arrival they all went into Julfa to pay a visit, and as already for a year past the Capuchin Fathers had been there, our (Carmelite) Fathers following, when the populace saw so many European Religious they were struck with amazement and stupefaction, and in a short time a small storm arose so that 'commota est universa civitas'—the whole town was in an uproar—commencing with the clergy, and the bishop did not fail to issue his threats and prohibitions, and to stop the Julfa people from sending their sons to our Fathers to be taught (for the Capuchin Fathers already had a considerable number of boys). But, thanks to the Lord, up till now their wicked intention has had no effect, the fathers of the boys, most of whom are well-to-do merchants trading usually in Europe, resisting it, as they want their sons to learn our languages, expecting something useful to come out of it, and also having in view that it may be of great benefit to them to have, and to have had, good relations with the European Religious . . . so many documents and powers of attorney the Religious here have drawn up for them for the courts in Europe, by which they have recovered much of their money and goods, which would have been as good as lost owing to the failure and neglect of their own agents and representatives: and they also make use of our Religious to get translated the letters which sovereigns write here and there in their favour. . . . At present our Fathers are enjoying peace and quiet in Julfa. Fr. Stephen and Fr. Cornelius . . . are dwelling there . . . after the departure of Fr. Felix to Basra orders arrived from the Fr. Vicar Provincial in Goa making Fr. Felix Vicar of the mission in Julfa, should a good opportunity of getting into Julfa occur, as for long past our superiors had desired. . . . We are much befriended by the Headman of Julfa, named Sarfaraz, who has his own house next that one where at present they are dwelling . . . the kindnesses he does to the 'Carmelite Fathers of the 'Pope', as they call us here. . . ."

A few weeks later:

"things at Julfa are so far going well, under the protection of Sarfaraz, though the bishop and priests have shown some opposition and made difficulties . . ."³

and the writer added the suggestion that

"from Florence and Leghorn, where Armenian merchants trade, letters should be written to Julfa, laying stress on the importance of maintaining good relations with the Fathers. . . ."

Notwithstanding the evidence they had had of the resentment of an influential part of the populace of Julfa at so many Latin Religious taking up residence there, the Jesuits persisted.

¹ O.C.D. 237 i.

² 9.8.1653, O.C.D. 236 k.

³ *Idem*, 26.8.1653.

They had arrived, Frs. François Rigordi and Aimé Chezaud, 30.6.1653;¹ the former had been o the Court (at Mashhad), and

“returned greatly favoured, having been authorized to open houses at Julfa and . . . as
“I myself have read in the Persian. . . . The Jesuits are negotiating for a Residence in
“Julfa, having obtained the ‘farman’ from the Shah; but, in spite of that, they are meeting
“with much opposition from the” (Armenian) “clergy; while our Fathers, who have no
“special permit or sanction to live in Julfa, so far are being left in peace there by the favour
“of the Headman of the town. Fr. Dimas, who was such a good missionary to the Armenians,
“left a good example and Sarfaraz was very fond of him. . . .”²

But hardly was the ink dry on those last lines, when Fr. Balthazar had to append a postcript to his letter to the Praepositus General, Joachim of Jesus Mary:³

“ . . . After having written to your Reverence at length . . . at this point there arrived
“in haste Fr. Stephen, to give us the news of the great disturbance there was in Julfa—
“the whole town in a commotion—seeing there so many ‘Frank’ Religious, especially since
“the coming there of the Fathers of the Company of Jesus. . . .”

In a later communication, 22.4.1654, he mentioned that the protest of the schismatics against the intrusion of the ‘Frank’ missionaries took the form of:

“sending one of their number to the Shah’s Court, to urge their demands to (be allowed to)
“eject from Julfa the ‘Frank’ Fathers, who were dwelling there, i.e. the reverend Fathers of
“the Society of Jesus, the Capuchin Fathers and our own—all of them at considerable
“distances the ones from the others—they” (the Armenians) “even alleging that the
“‘Frank’ Fathers wanted to hedge them round” (“saying in their petition that the ‘Frank’
“Religious had come to pervert his subjects and made Christians of Muhammadans—
“a thing enough to have us ejected not from Julfa only, but from all this realm of Persia,”
is the version of Fr. Felix, 20.6.1654, O.C.D. 237 i). “According to what at present is
“reported to us, the envoy sent by our opponents to the Court was dressed down and
“humiliated there, the king with sharp words asking the individual, or having him asked,
“how they (the Armenians) thought they would stop the ‘Frank’ Fathers from living
“amongst them, when *his* father” (i.e. Shah Safi) “had allowed them to make churches in
“the very houses of the king himself. . . .”⁴

The newly appointed Vicar Provincial—that Fr. Felix who in 1651 was looking forward to the opening of a Residence in Julfa, and had been nominated as its first Vicar—from Basra

“arrived back on the eve of Corpus Christi, found two of our Religious living at Julfa with
“the desire of establishing a House there; they had been admitted by the Armenians
“because they said they were there only to learn the language. . . . I have several times
“consulted these Fathers of ours, who all say that establishment in Julfa will be of no utility.
“Recently in a letter from our Fr. General addressed to Fr. Stephen,, it was stated that our
“superiors deem establishment at Julfa and Kung useless. So I have recalled the Fathers
“to this convent. . . .”⁵

Referring again to this eight months later, 20.12.1655, Fr. Felix from Shiraz explained:

“Seeing that the conjunction was a bad one I withdrew the Fathers already at Julfa

¹ 9.8.1653, O.C.D. 236 k.

² Fr. Balthazar, 3.12.1653, O.C.D. 236 k.

³ *Idem*, 4.12.1653.

⁴ This allusion to the convents of the Carmelites and Augustinians being on royal property has a ring of Persian sarcasm and displeasure about its wording.

⁵ 20.6.1654, O.C.D. 237 i.

"before any difficulty arose. The Capuchins had their own house, bought with their own money: the Jesuits had a licence from the king to buy a house and make a church, and yet both were compelled to evacuate Julfa. . . ."

After the withdrawal of the two Carmelite Fathers in June 1654 it fared badly with the Capuchins and Jesuits

"because of the very great opposition of the bishop and clerics. The Lord has been gracious to us in that we are out of Julfa, because we have seen how the Capuchins and Jesuits, after considerable loss and suffering, have been forced to abandon Julfa, so that at present there is no one there . . ."

wrote the Vicar Provincial, 15.12.1654.

The Jesuits succeeded after an interval—later than 1658, the exact year has not been traced—in getting back into Julfa (it was their only House in Persia); but for the Carmelites there was to ensue an interval of forty years before the attempt was again made to reside inside the schismatic stronghold. The result of that in the 1650's did more harm than good:

"The Armenians here show themselves more opposed to conversion than they have ever done to us in the past. . . . Seduced by their schismatic doctors they have a greater aversion than ever. But their patriarch Philip is dead:¹ they have made another named Hacop (James), from whom we hope for some improvement . . ."

remarked Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, in two letters of 15.1.1655 and 15.5.1655.²

¹ His death must have taken place between January and May 1655, for he is mentioned as alive in the former letter.

² As to these patriarchs the *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, vol. IV, 1930, Paris, under "Arménie . . . XXI Les Catholiques d'Echmiadzin et l'Eglise Catholique XVI et XVII siècles" has:

"4. . . . The reply of Pope Urban VIII" (i.e. to the letter of profession of faith sent by his predecessor the Katholikos Moses) "dated 16.7.1640 was handed to the new Katholikos, Philip of Aghbek. He sent to Innocent X about the year 1647 a letter of obedience, signed by 25 bishops. Such was the prestige of Philip that the notables of Constantinople deputed him to remedy the grave disorder in patriarchal affairs. Several of the archbishops in the capital" (Constantinople) "were already in union with the Roman Church. . . . After his arrival in Constantinople Philip deposed Eleazar, and in a short time by his collections of money got rid of the debts of the patriarchate. James IV, his successor (of Julfa), distinguished himself by his talents as an administrator, and by his faithfulness to the see of Rome, especially towards the end of his life. He also was summoned to Constantinople to extract the patriarchate from new and serious difficulties. . . . James IV, during his stay in the capital" (i.e. Constantinople) "a short time before his death, renewed for the third time his act of submission to the Pope, whom he recognized to be 'head of the universal Church'. Philip had been Katholikos from 1633-55: Hacop was Katholikos 1655-80.

"There was an anti-patriarch from 1663-82 in the person of Archbishop Eleazar of Aintab, who in 1651 succeeded in getting rid of all his rivals. Skilful, dexterous and violent, with unbridled ambition, he will be seen for nearly half a century at times invested with the highest titles of his Church, at others subjected to most humiliating bastinadoing without ever being cured of his thirst for power . . ."

On 29.9.1661 the Katholikos Hacop (i.e. James IV) mentioned above had addressed a letter to the Sovereign Pontiff, carried to Rome by the Dominican Archbishop of Nakhchiwan: and Pope Alexander's reply of 5.8.1662 (Arch. Vat., *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 64, p. 255 (226)) with its expression of sympathy and exhortation to union with Rome was to the following effect:

"Pope Alexander VII to the venerable brother James, Patriarch of the whole Armenian people, greeting and the Apostolic blessing. It is with mixed feelings assuredly that the Pontifical mind has been moved by the letter of your Fraternity of the 29th September last year, to which was joined the prayer and testimony of Our venerable brother the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, a pious and religious man and very fond of you and of the Armenian people, who forwarded it. For a sentiment of immense anxiety was caused by the mention of the very grievous woes that so long pitifully harass the Armenian race, once most flourishing and obedient to the Holy See, and We grieve the more since in any way to get rid of them or even to alleviate them seems rather difficult, so much so that We seem able to grant to Our peculiarly beloved sons practically only the good office of commiseration, nor can We bring any other help to bear, almost, than that of earnest prayers to the Most High offered in sooth from a most profound feeling of kindest charity. Yet, if You are willing earnestly to add your shares to them with hearts truly converted to the Lord, there will be nothing which We cannot hope from Him Who is not less rich in mercy than powerful in works.

"But this point should be entirely fixed firm in your minds and alone purposed, that you will strive to cleave with constancy to this holy Apostolic Chair, to which you clearly bear witness as being recognized by you as the head and mistress of all churches, nor must you in any way allow yourselves henceforth to be led away from the solidity of this Rock.

"Herein your letter truly gave Us cause for no small joy; for We saw with what great ardour of piety and religious devotion you, excellent man, and presiding far and wide over so many people and holy bishops, profess due obedience

The animosity of the schismatic Armenians was not confined to Julfa. By a Dominican returning to Nakhchiwan on 13.7.1652 Pope Innocent X (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 57, 188, No. 205; see appendix for Latin text) wrote to Shah 'Abbas II:

“ . . . Out of Our charity and because of the obligation of Our office We so long that “these” (the Dominicans) “and other men of Our Catholic religion in Your dominions “be defended and protected by the authority and justice of Your Highness from hurt and “wrong being done by the schismatics and wicked men that, although indeed We know it “to be superfluous, still We cannot refrain from requesting it of You. . . .”

The news of Fr. Paul Piromalli's election (Bull dated 14.6.1655, but he was still in Rome, 5.4.1656, *vide* Fr. Lemmens' *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*) had reached the Carmelites early in 1657, and they were evidently afraid of further conflict arising out of it:

“We have heard that Fr. Paul Piromalli¹ has been made archbishop of Armenia. . . . “He is of a temperament far too violent and vehement, and had been the cause of great “ill-feeling and repugnance of the Armenians for us . . .”:²

nd, 24.9.1657:

“They say that Mgr Paul Piromalli is coming to obtain, or arrange for the establishment “of a House of the Dominicans” (i.e. in Julfa).

The Brief of Pope Alexander VII recommending the new archbishop to 'Abbas II is dated 10.10.1656 from S. Maria Maggiore, 27.5.1656³ and, after many fatherly invocations to God for the Shah and to Christian charity, went on:

“ . . . Meanwhile You will give no small demonstration of Your affection for Us . . . “by receiving with Your wonted royal clemency and kindness Our venerable brother “Paul Piromalli, Bishop of Nakhchiwan . . .”

By the end of this reign the position could have been little changed, and it only remains to note that the Carmelite Fr. Joseph of S. Mary, Bishop of Hierapolis, after his return journey

“and submission to the Roman Church, and venerate the Prince of the Apostles in the person of Our humble self, and “request for yourself and your flock water gushing forth to supply eternal life from these wells of salvation which are with “Us.

“Since then desertion of this tender mother's breast and leadership has been of all evils that have rushed in on you “their first fount and root, it is only right to deem that it is by a return to her that the woes, which now oppress you, “can under God's blessing be certainly burned away.

“Wherefore, venerable brother, diligently labour and care for this so salutary perfect union with all your heart: “exhort, warn and strengthen all your sons: cease not to be able to gain for them by prayer and for yourself endless glory “in heaven and, if it please the Lord, some more peaceful and tranquil conditions for passing this life also. We shall “never fail from devoting to it the helps of Our own good-offices and authority which can be employed with advantage “and profit. But you will understand more clearly every point from the letter of Our venerable brethren the Cardinals “of the holy Roman Church in the Sacred Congregation for Propagating the Faith. Moreover We beseech of God “Almighty that He be propitious and favourable to your Fraternity and to the whole Armenian people: and We grant “the Apostolic blessing coming from all Our fatherly heart.

“Given at S. Mary Major, Rome, under the Fisherman's ring, the 5th day of August 1662, in the eighth year of Our “Pontificate.”

¹ After his return to Rome, 22.9.1656, Fr. Paul Piromalli published (a) *Oeconomia Salvatoris nostri explicans ex solis Prophetis et instantiam Regis Persarum petitis ineffabile, adorandumque Incarnatoris Sacramentum*, and also at Vienna (b) *Apologia de duplici natura Christi, Divina scilicet et humana, ex S. Cyrillo Alexandrino petita contra P. Simonem Armenorum doctorem*. Later (c) *Vocabularium Armenum Latinum*, (d) *Grammatica Armeno-Latina*, (e) *Directorium ad purgandos libros Armenorum: Relatio prioris eius itineris Armeniae germano eius fratre Cappuccino edita*, (f) *Transductio aliquarum epistolarum S. Leonis Papae in linguam Armenam*, (g) *Transductio epistolae Cyrilli in linguam Armenam*, (h) *Transductio definitionis Concilii Chalcedonensis*, (i) *Apologia contra Stephanum sacerdotem*, (j) *Apologia contra Nirsan sacerdotem*, (k) *Responsiones ad dubia Armenorum*.

² Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, 8.4.1656, O.C.D. 237 c.

³ Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 61, Alex. 7, ann. 2, p. 39 (*vide* Appendix of Latin Briefs).

from India through Persia in 1658 had reported that there were only six Armenian Catholic families remaining at Isfahan—the rest were schismatics.¹

* * * * *

More unanimous and far keener the Carmelites are seen over the prospect of useful work in reconciling that branch of the Chaldaean church which at this period was mainly settled round the shores of Lake Urmieh in Azarbaijan, towards the Turkish frontier: and, so that the reader may grasp their position *vis-à-vis* the others of that race (in recent times known in Europe as 'Assyrian') also to be mentioned in this reign, the following outlines of their immediate past are given.

Elected Procurator of the 'Persian' Mission, to attend the Chapter General of the Order in Rome, Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns (a Belgian by race) set off from Isfahan, 22.5.1652; and, being a true apostle in his ardent zeal to search out communities offering a likely field for conversion from schism, or abandoned, he had the assent of the other Religious to his taking the route to Europe via Tabriz.² Because of oppression they were suffering from the Khan, or governor, there, fourteen Chaldaeans, heads of the Chaldaean community, had come to Isfahan: and, as they had not stopped long, all the Carmelites had been able to find out about them was that they dwelt four to six days' journey beyond the city of Tabriz; but they were only too eager to get into relations with these Assyrians.

Of them this notice is to be found in the preface to the book of Pietro Strozzi, *De dogmatibus Chaldaeorum*: and in Dr. Fortescue's *Lesser Eastern Churches*:

"After the great Christian Church of Persia in the middle of the fifth century had fallen "for the most part into schism, and periods of fierce dispute with the partisans of the "opposite Monothelite heresy, it became definitely Nestorian before the Arab conquest of "Persia in the seventh century. Cut off from the Western Church, and even from the "Eastern patriarchates by their heresy, rejected of all, the Nestorian church in Persia "endured till in the 15th century Timur the Lame in his career of destruction across Persia "swept the remnant of the Chaldaean Christians, after the massacres, into the mountains "of Kurdistan for refuge, and round about the Turco-Persian frontier. The 'patriarch "of Babylon' (Seleucia) became a hereditary office in one family in the 15th century; "but, after the death of Simeon (Shimun) Bar Mama in 1551, a party with influence broke "away from his nephew and nominated successor Simeon Denha, choosing the monk, "John Sulaka. . . ."

" . . . Under Julius III (1549-55), as certain of the Nestorian Chaldaeans had seceded "from obedience to the 'patriarch at Babylon' and in abhorrence of the Nestorian heresy "had come into communion with the Catholic Church, the Sovereign Pontiff had appointed "for them, as they petitioned, a patriarch—the same whom for this reason they had chosen "—Simeon Sulaka, a monk of the Order of S. Pacomius.⁴ He went back to his people "with the pallium of a patriarch and the title of 'patriarch of the Eastern Assyrians', and, "taking up his residence at Amid (i.e. Diarbakr) ordained archbishops, bishops and very "many priests. . . . And so the Chaldaean race, which up to that time had been subject "to the 'patriarch at Babylon', was divided into two parts. Then, Sulaka having been

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 238, p. 58.

² *Idem*, vol. 292, pp. 535-42.

³ For the first part of this historical sketch see Dr. Adrian Fortescue's *Lesser Eastern Churches*: the second part comes from an Italian translation of Strozzi's treatise, given in *S.R.*, vol. 292.

⁴ " . . . He arrived in Rome 28th November of the Greek year 1864, corresponding with the Christian year 1552, "made his profession of Faith on 20.2.1553, and on 19.4.1553 was proclaimed Patriarch of the Chaldaeans" (*vide S.N.R.*, VII, p. 634, memorandum by Mgr S. Borgia) "by Pope Julius III. 'Abd-jesu made his profession of Faith to Pope Pius IV "on 17.3.1562, and received the Pallium. . . . Ayatullah died in 1580. . . . It was Simon Denha who abandoned Diarbakr "and transferred his residence to the mountains of Kurdistan. . . ."

“put to death by the Turks, at the instigation of the opposite party as it is said, in his place there was substituted 'Abd-jesu, a monk of the same Order, a man of wonderful erudition in a variety of languages and in knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, about whom in the life of Pius the Fourth there is distinguished mention; he came to Rome for confirmation (of his election) and was present at the Council of Trent. His likeness can be seen painted in the Sala Regia of the Vatican palace among the Cardinals and other prelates attending Alexander III, receiving at Venice the penitent Emperor Frederic. 'Abd-jesu gained very much ground, and converted many of the Nestorians to the Catholic Church, and spread wisely the authority he had received from the Apostolic See; his successors afterwards either did not know how, or were unable to retain it for themselves. For there succeeded to them Ayatallah, and he was also a monk of the same Order, who lived but a short time, and afterwards Denha Simeon, who from being archbishop of Jilu and Seert had been made patriarch, and was neither suitable in years nor in his (religious) knowledge and teaching. At the time when the bishop of Sidon went to the East as Apostolic delegate, leaving Diarbakr, where the other patriarchs of the 'Eastern 'Assyrians' had resided, he (the patriarch) had removed to the province of Zain [*sic*] . . . on the Persian frontier. . . . In that place still remains today his successor, also called Simeon . . . far inferior, as we have heard, to his predecessors in the esteem and number of his subjects, so that the position of the 'patriarch at Babylon' now seems to have been restored to its former extent of influence through Simeon going, of his own free will as it were, into exile. . . .”

“So,” says the account submitted by Fr. Dionysius through the Sacr. Congregation:¹

“we considered it useful to take the road to that region . . . in order to be able to represent the whole state of that race, and give an account of the same to Your Holiness and to the superiors of our Order. . . . After I had arrived in Tabriz and made enquiries where to find the patriarch of this community, I finally found him in a place called Khusruabad, three miles distant from Salmas and four days' journey from Tabriz. The patriarch was staying in this place, Khusruabad, and not in Zaina . . . the former residence of his predecessor; because *four years* ago² for fear of his life it behoved him to flee, and, having no hope of returning, he has fixed his residence in this place, Khusruabad, which is inside Persia and subject to the king of Persia. So, when I had met the patriarch, the first matter I said to him was to inform him that the object of my visit was the union of himself and his subjects with the Catholic Church, explaining to him the terms of union his predecessors had had with Holy Church and the Holy See of S. Peter, of which precisely they retained little or nothing. But, as he did not know the Persian language, which indeed is not current in these regions, I had to speak to him by the intermediary of one of his men who knew it. This interpreter, a good man and prudent, at once became much edified that I had made all that journey, impelled by charity alone and with the object of succouring their souls: he said that I had acted like the good shepherd, who when a sheep had strayed goes and looks for it in the midst of the other flocks, and takes it back to its own. So they, he said, being as it were lost sheep strayed from the flock of S. Peter to which they belonged, I had come that long way solely to lead them back to it . . . and other similar expressions of gratitude were used.

“And then the patriarch was induced to write to Your Holiness a letter in the ancient Chaldaean tongue, of which I insert here two copies of the translations, which the students of the Maronite College in Rome have made of it, and beg Your Holiness for greater precaution to deign to have it translated by someone who knows that language well:

“Prayers and blessings from the patriarchal see.

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 292, pp. 535-42.

² This dates to 1648-9 the migration of the Assyrians of Mar Shimun's following to NW. Persia from Zain in (Turkish) Kurdistan.

" 'The Divine salutation, true love, Christian glory from mouth of Mar Simeon, 'patriarch of the Chaldaeans, to the father of fathers, chief of the shepherds . . . the 'holy Pope Innocent, head of all Christendom. Thou hast sent a message to us 'from God, from Thee, O holy Pope our father. For a long time past we have not 'received any blessing from Thee. Thou art the guardian of the see of Peter and 'Paul, our masters, because there is one and the same faith, one synod for You and 'for us: the four synods are all true in our eyes, all that which is accepted by the 'church of Peter and Paul: we also accept the same words, just as Our Lord said to 'Peter, prince of the Apostles: "To Thee are given the keys of earth and heaven, and " "all that which is loosed on earth shall be loosed in heaven, and all that which is " "bound on earth will be bound in heaven. Do Thou have love for us Chaldaeans " "for the love of Christ.

" 'Many are the Chaldaeans of Mar Shimun. The districts are:¹

Gulmar	Thoumo	Lassan	Vaten	Urmi
Brour	Taire	Nondis	Vuostan	Tanais
Gaur	Vualtu	Salmas	Ahrich	Solduz
Gelu	Thoil	Abbak	Sistan	Arsenuch
Bau	Bednura	Kansies	Thirgauer	Maragha
Dasru				

" 'Altogether there are 40,000 households, children of the see of Mar Shimun, and " 'we too all look to the see of Peter and Paul. And Thou hast sent us a message from " 'God. From Thee, O holy Pope . . . send to us blessings so that they may be for " 'us and for all the faithful. Father Dionysius, the Discalced Carmelite, being here " 'present we have sent this memorial with him, and all of us Chaldaeans pray for Thy " 'See, O holy Pope . . . the faithful Chaldaeans are Thy footstool. . . .

" 'Here ended this letter, begun on Saturday, feast of the martyrs Peter and Paul on " 'June 29th in the year 1964 of the blessed Greeks. I finished this letter, begun in the " 'blessed district of Sal'as, in the village of Khusrabad, under the roof of S. Longius " '[? sic] to whose prayers we are all faithful. . . .

" 'This letter has been written and recopied by 'Abd-jesu, bathed in tears, son of Peter, " '(sealed) the most humble

"Simeon, Chaldaean Patriarch.

"I stayed for five days in the house of the patriarch. He is a man of good physical "appearance, temperate, modest, kindly and also one who allows himself to be won by "kindness, and moreover liberal as far as his poverty permits: and the rest of the community "is of similar character: however many are present, big and small feed with him. It is "true that his poverty does not allow him more than bread, milk and sometimes eggs, and "to drink water (for as to meat he has to abstain from it all his life: as to chastity he must "remain a celibate). Among his people he has a good reputation. In his home province "of Zain . . . he had an ample and respectable income, but since he was obliged to fly "from it he has been left with practically nothing, so that, as they told me, now he did "not get more than 15 or 20 piastres annually: and I was told that he receives some sum "of money to ordain a bishop, and that apart from such occasions he receives little from "his people. In their estimation he has very good authority, and the whole community "submits to whatever he may want.

¹ These names are as spelt by the Carmelites and like many others the pronunciation imperfectly transliterated; but a distinguished personage in 'Iraq identifies: Brour with Barwari (Bau possibly with Balk ?) in 'Iraq just south of the present Turkish-'Iraqi frontier and west of the Great Zab river: Thoumo with Tkuma, Taire with Tiari, Vualtu with Waltu, Thoil with Tal, Gulmar with Julamirk lying along that river in Turkey north of that frontier. Gelu with Jilu, Gaur with Gawar (Diza Gawar) farther to the east of that river in Turkish territory. Lassan with Lizan, Albak with Albaq: and, farther east still across the Turkish-Persian frontier inside Iran, Thirgauer with Targawar, which is west of Urmieh (Urmi), Solduz with Sulduz, Nondis with Nudiz. Maragha should perhaps be Margawar. Salmas is well known (see maps 37°-44°).

"On the other hand he is very negligent and thoughtless in his pastoral office: not once in eight days did I see him seriously occupied in any thing which immediately concerned him, except that he attended in the morning and evening at their customary prayers.

"As to its habitat his community is divided: one part lives subject (in temporals) to the king of Persia, the other part—except for some few lands belonging to them near the towns of ——— and Van subject to the Sultan of Turkey—is in the province of Zain . . . in the country of Kurdistan, and is subject to a prince, also a Muhammadan, named Taj-ud-Din [*? sic*]. The latter makes use of them for warfare, and can put up to 12,000 under arms. They are a very bellicose race, and in particular so great is their innate hatred for the Muhammadans that they consider nothing a greater festival than to find an opportunity for putting them to the sword. In Persia the greater part of them live around the town of Urmieh, and there are about 100 hamlets or settlements of land: and there will be some settlements with 200 families, so that between large and small hamlets they would come to a total of some 5,000 families (so they told me). In the province of Maragha some 5 or 6 hamlets, almost as many near the town of Solduz: and so on for the others. They subsist usually from agriculture, and are very poor on account of the great and constant oppression they suffer from the Muhammadans.

"Next as to the language, the whole race uses a Chaldaean vernacular as the channel of communication among themselves: in addition to that tongue, that portion of them living in Kurdistan, or rather Zain . . . speaks the Kurdish language¹ and that portion living in Persia speaks Turkish, and many of them also know Armenian because of their proximity to Armenia. But what I much bewail is that that portion residing in Kurdistan cannot be helped by European missionaries, because these Muhammadan Kurds are evil men, robbers and . . . so savage that no foreigner can take even a single step in their country.

"With regard to their errors and abuses, it is true that these are great and numerous, but they arise more out of ignorance than obstinacy, so that they do not display stubborn resistance to the truth. I hope that the grace of God will free them from these. First, they have remained Nestorian: and every evening at public prayer commemoration of Theodore and Nestorius is made by a deacon; although indeed, as the people are little read, they know little of what the dogma of Nestorius consists. I was once questioned by the interpreter in the presence of the patriarch as to what we thought about Nestorius: and I replied that, as Nestorius had been condemned by the General Council of Ephesus, he could not be followed or accepted, and that we ought to believe that Christ our Lord from the first moment of His conception, in which the union of the two natures was made in the person of the Word, was very God and very Man. They did not show themselves antagonistic to this doctrine.

"Two days after that there happened something which caused me much surprise. The patriarch was writing the above letter to His Holiness: and I was present, but in order that everything might go forth with greater frankness and sincerity I determined not to say anything, and to allow them to act, whether for good or for evil. When they had finished they begged me to say whether what they had written was well said. They had written 'Vobis et Nobis est una Fides, et unus synodus' (You and we have one and the same faith and synod). "I merely took notice of it, and asked them of which synod they meant to speak, seeing that there were four General Councils—Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon. They enquired of me whether all those four were recognized by the see of S. Peter, and when I answered 'Yes'—after the patriarch had reflected for a little regarding that of Ephesus—they then added that they held all four councils to be true, and they accepted all that the see of Peter and Paul accepted.

"The amenableness of this poor folk is great, so that I hope . . . that it will not be difficult to persuade them of the truth. I took it also as a sign of this amenableness that, while they were writing the letter, I said to them that that day was the feast of S. Peter

¹ Generally known as 'Kirmanji'.

"and S. Paul" (i.e. June 29th): "they then wished to include this in the date of this letter, although their custom is to celebrate the feast of SS. Peter and Paul in the winter.

"As to their Sacraments, their errors are many. As regards baptism my interpreter told me that it was only celebrated twice in the year, once in the summer, the other time in the winter and that their custom was as follows: when an infant is born, they keep it 40 days, at the end of which they carry it to the church, where it is signed with the sign of the holy Cross by the priest. Should it die following this they bury it in consecrated ground, if previously in common" (i.e. unconsecrated) "ground. Afterwards the day for baptism is awaited and then they baptize it: and should it happen to die previously, it will die without being baptized. But I am not sure whether that be the truth; because, when with the greatest delicacy possible I begged the patriarch to abandon an abuse so harmful to souls, saying that every time an infant should be in danger of death it should be baptized immediately, he replied that they did so.

"They do not have Confirmation, unless they confer it together with baptism. They do not have Confession. The interpreter admitted to me that formerly they did have it, but said that on account of one confessor having revealed the confession of a woman there had ensued a very great turmoil, in which four hundred persons were slain, and for that reason they had done away with Confession. When I answered that something instituted by Christ could not for that reason be disliked, nor could baptism be done away with for anything untoward whatever that might follow, it was not hard for him to submit to reason, although they display misgiving and suspicion at women having to tell their most secret affairs into the ear of a priest, and tell of divers untoward happenings and sinful acts which they say have occurred among the Armenians (living) near them on occasions when women have made a confession.

"The Eucharist they receive after the ancient manner—in their hands and they themselves put it into the mouth. They never carry it outside as 'Viaticum for the Sick', so that, except that sometimes they carry a sick person on their shoulders into the church to receive it, they die without any sacrament at all, because they do not have Extreme Unction.

"Rarely they celebrate the sacrifice of holy Mass, nor do they recognize any obligation to hear it on Sundays, because they omit it on those days too. During the (Mass) time no one other than the priest and his deacon can enter the small chamber where the altar is, so much so that, were anything at all to enter, even nothing more than a pebble or a drop of water, they say that the sacrament would not be consummated. . . .

". . . As to the sacrament of Orders . . . they believe that the patriarchate is attributed to one family, so that, if an adult man be lacking in it, they would still have to take as patriarch even a child. He who now rules is about 33 years old, and for more than 20 years has been patriarch, and in that time he has consecrated all the bishops that have been appointed. . . . In their dress and in the matter of shaving the patriarch, bishops and priests are indistinguishable from laymen: and they too (as I have already said, this race is very bellicose) ride on horseback, and go fighting like the laymen. The priests not only live married, but they enter into second marriages too.

"As regards the sacrament of matrimony they do not recognize it to be indissoluble—not on the ground of infidelity, but even because of sterility in the wife they repudiate her and take another. It is not uncommon for marriages between cousins to take place: and they also intermarry with Armenians, having the rule that the wife follows her husband's religion.

"In the matter of Divine worship, twice daily they pray in public, once in the morning for a very short time, the other time in the evening, but very negligently and stupidly, and without any decorousness or people assisting. Some families of these people (five or six, I think) years ago went to live at Abranar, the place of residence of Mgr the archbishop of Nakhchiwan and the Dominican Fathers and, on seeing the decorousness of the Catholic Offices, they were converted and now live like good Catholics. . . .

"... They do not have the custom of having holy pictures, and have only the holy cross, although, on explaining to them the grounds for having them, the Assyrians did "not show obstinacy" (in the matter). "The priests do not observe the canonical hours.

"On Wednesdays and Fridays they abstain from flesh-meat, but from one vespers to the next, only eating when the sun has gone below the horizon. The patriarch has to observe perpetual abstinence, not only from the time when he is made patriarch, but from the commencement of his life his mother must abstain from flesh-meat all the time she is nourishing her child. Lent is observed by all with great severity: for they abstain also from wine, and do not eat more than once daily, a little before sunset; without even labourers being dispensed from it.

"... The Chaldaeans observe many superstitions, even the ecclesiastics, such as divination by opening the book of the Gospel, and other ways of telling fortunes, days for travelling. . . .

"The points where the greatest difficulty is to be apprehended are the following:

"(a) for them to abandon the commemoration of Nestorius (in the diptych),

"(b) to make confession of all sins,

"(c) to regard matrimony as indissoluble,

"(d) for the priests not to remarry when the first wife dies (although this is a matter for "authorization by Your Holiness)."

[In his letter of 29.9.1653—O.C.D. 237 c.—he added a fifth difficulty:

"above all the great fear they have of ill-treatment by the Muhammadan governors, were "they (the Chaldaeans) to unite with us, because those tyrants seize on any pretext and "occasion to ill-treat them, and extort money from them. . . ."]

"But there are on the other hand good foundations on which hope may be based for "this community, with the help of God, to be brought back to the bosom of Holy Church:

"*Firstly*, the obedient regard they have for the holy See of Peter, as shown in particular "by the letter of the patriarch, and they celebrate the feast of the prince of the Apostles "with a longer Office than any other, beginning to say it in the afternoon some hours before "sunset, and continuing all night up till about 3 a.m.

"*Secondly*, the poverty in which the patriarch and all the race live, partly because they "are actually poor people, and partly because they are overtaxed and oppressed by the "Khans, or governors on behalf of the Shah, who, as they are very far from the Court, "are easily able to extort from, and charge to excess, people subject to them.

"*Thirdly*, the nobility and greatness of spirit which appears innate in this people, and "which they display especially in wartime and in recognizing benefits conferred on them, "so that in case Your Holiness should deem fit to grant the patriarch some financial help, "it can be regarded as sure to give a great impetus to their being brought back (to union). "It is true that neither the patriarch nor any of his people asked me for this, or insinuated "it at all.

"... *Fifthly*, this patriarch and his community are totally separated from the patriarch "of the Chaldaeans of Baghdad: he is not dependent on him, nor is he a rival of his, nor "of others: and he would be able of himself alone to submit to union with the Holy See, "without any communication with that patriarch of Babylon.

"Rome, 6th March (1653) feast of our holy Father Cyril."

A note had been made on this report (by the Pope or Cardinal Prefect) that instructions had been given to the Secretary of the Sac. Cong. to find someone suitable to send to Persia in order to explore the affair with these Chaldaeans: and that Don Ferdinand Gioerida, who had been there on other occasions in the service of the Church, had been found—this was that nephew of Pietro della Valle's first wife Ma'ani Gioerida, a Chaldaean himself, of whom

mention has been already made as baptized by Fr. Dimas in 1616, sent to study in the Urban College of Propaganda, as interpreter assigned to accompany Bishop Bernard of Baghdad on his journey to Persia in 1639, and in 1642 sent with letters to the Shah from the Pope.

Several letters of Fr. Dionysius continue to refer to this visit of his: that of 26.12.1652, written from quarantine in the lazaretto of Venice, on his way to Rome, gives the information that the "present" patriarch, (i.e. Mar Shimun III) had been the one to move from Zain . . . to Khusruabad, "three or four years ago," i.e. in 1648-9:

"It is true," the Carmelite remarks, "that they retain no remembrance of the union, "but a very great and particular devotion for the Holy See and the Holy Father, and they "think that they believe the same as does the Holy, Apostolic See, although they have "fallen back into Nestorianism (through want of culture, and the great distance between "the two places) and a thousand errors; but it is out of ignorance, not malice that they "err. . . ."¹

On his way back from Rome, after the Chapter General—from Messina, from Malta, from Aleppo, 7.11.1653, Fr. Dionysius continued to dwell in letters on the importance of something being done to assist those Assyrians of the north-west Persian frontier. Arrived in Basra early in 1654 he found there the Vicar Provincial, Fr. Felix, and galvanized the latter with his enthusiasm, both impatiently awaiting there a decision of the Sac. Congregation and authority to proceed further in the matter,² until Easter when they travelled together to Isfahan. There, in June-July, the Vicar Provincial decided to send off Fr. Dionysius³ to Khusruabad to see whether the patriarch was persevering in his good intentions, and to observe the attitude of his clergy and lay-people.⁴ As he was about to set out, letters from the Sac. Congregation arrived with news of the dispatch of the priest Ferdinand Gioerida direct to the patriarch, Mar Shimun III, in order to smooth and open the way to a return to active reunion. The Carmelite Provincial therefore dispatched Fr. Dionysius from Isfahan, 24.7.1654, to join the emissary from the Sac. Congregation. On reaching Zinjan, eight days' journey from Tabriz, about 18.8.1654, the former met Armenians who had been travelling with Father Gioerida and he learnt to his dismay and grief how in fording the Araxes between Erzerum and Erivan the priest nephew of Pietro della Valle had been carried away by the water and drowned.⁵

"An Armenian trader, now in Georgia, has preserved the papers and his effects, some "300 piastres, which will be recovered when the said Armenian trader returns to his home, "a day's distance from Abranar. The rest of the money he had on his person was taken, "because, when his body was later washed on to the river bank, it was despoiled by Kurds."⁶

Deciding to continue his journey, Fr. Dionysius reached Khusruabad via Abranar, 4.10.1654, to find Mar Shimun III upset at the death of Fr. Ferdinand Gioerida, for in his poverty he

¹ See the great authority on the 'Persian Church', the Rev. Dr. J. Labourt, in the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, 1908, "Chaldaeans";

"The Turco-Persian wars obliged Simeon (a) to reside in the mountains near Salmas in Persia . . . this change of residence had important consequences: the successor of Simeon in the end retained jurisdiction only over the provinces "subject to the Persians and had no longer any intercourse with Rome except at long intervals. In this way many "Chaldaeans returned to the Nestorian heresy (if, indeed, they had ever abandoned it). Simeon died in 1593. . . . In "1619 his successor, Simeon II, wrote that he would visit Rome, which promise, however, he was unable to execute. "In 1650 Simeon III corresponded with Innocent X." (a) With all deference to Dr. Labourt, this can hardly be correct, or that the removal took place under Simeon I, seeing that Fr. Dionysius states twice that Mar Shimun III made the move into Persia in 1648-9, when Persia and Turkey were not at war.

² Fr. Dionysius, Basra, 30.3.1654, O.C.D. 242 a, and *S.R.*, vol. 292, p. 528; Fr. Felix, Basra, 10.4.1654, *S.R.*, vol. 292, p. 523.

³ *Vide* in *S.R.*, vol. 236, p. 205, letters from the Chaldaean patriarch to Rome.

⁴ Fr. Dionysius, 18-page report, Isfahan, 11.2.1655, *S.R.*, vol. 236, p. 215.

⁵ Fr. Dionysius, Tabriz, 28.8.1654, O.C.D. 237 c, to the Definitor General. Among the articles the dead priest was bringing was an emerald ring for the patriarch.

⁶ Fr. Felix, 16.8.1654.

had been looking to receive alms from the Pope. Fr. Dionysius remained at Khusruabad, handicapped by his ignorance of the Chaldaean vernacular and the difficulty of reaching precision through an interpreter imperfectly acquainted with the Persian language, until October 1654 when from the district of Salmas he went to that of Urmieh (which then owed religious allegiance to Mar Elias of the other (Mausil) branch of Chaldaeans, to Tirmaghar, visiting the Chaldaean bishops, to Solduz and Maragha. His estimate of the Assyrians under Mar Shimun inside the Persian frontier did not exceed 1,000 households in the whole of Azarbaijan, but that might include collateral families. His second report, to the Definitor General, preserved in the archives of the Sac. Congregation:

'Account of the second journey of Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns O.C.D. to the province and patriarch of those Chaldaeans who are under the rule of the king of Persia,'

and dated from Isfahan, 11.2.1655, is not here given: it runs to eighteen foolscap pages:¹ and there is also another account of eight pages relating his discussions with the patriarch and subsequent peregrinations in the archives of the Order.²

It would appear that the motive behind Fr. Dionysius' tour round the districts of Urmieh, Solduz, Maragha, etc., was to encourage bishops, priests and headmen to subscribe to the letter of the patriarch to Pope Innocent X, in which willingness was expressed to make submission: and that they did so with good will:³

"The letter from the patriarch to the Pope was subscribed by all the priests and the 'Rais' (i.e. headmen) of the districts of Salmas, Urmieh, Arsenouk, Solduz, Maragha, and another from three bishops was subscribed by all the priests and headmen of the province of 'Tirmaghar.'"⁴

In *S.R.*, vol. 236, p. 205 *et seq.*, letters from the Chaldaean patriarch, etc., to Rome are to be found: of the profession of faith then made by the patriarch and the Assyrians a translation in Latin is stated to be given in *Theologia Carmelitana* of Fr. Philip of the Most Holy Trinity.

Fr. Maximin of Jesus, who set out to return to his province in Europe in the spring of 1655⁵ was entrusted with the conveyance to Rome of the reports of the negotiations; but he arrived to find Pope Innocent X dead.

If the dates adopted in the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* be correct, that particular Mar Shimun (III) had died or been removed from office between 1654 and 1658 when, it states:

"Mar Shimun IV entered into relations with the Congregation of Propaganda, for which attitude his subjects tried to depose him. Alexander VII, however, defended him earnestly in a letter to the king of Persia, and urged that he might be permitted to return to his patriarchal office. . . ."

This is the Brief of 12.7.1664 to 'Abbas II (*Epistolae ad Principes*, vol. 65, Alex. 7, ann. 10, p. 167 (181) for text, see Appendix of Latin Briefs).

The calamitous ending to the dispatch of their Chaldaean-speaking envoy would seem to have damped active interest in the Sac. Congregation: perhaps there was no one so well qualified in Rome to duplicate the part assigned to Fr. Gioerida. For some years the Carmelites in Persia awaited the outcome:

"all admit that our Mission has never had such an opportunity . . . and perhaps will never have the like. . . ."

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 236, p. 215. ² Fr. Dionysius, Tabriz, 8.12.1654, O.C.D. 237 c.

⁴ Fr. Dionysius, Isfahan, 15.1.1655, O.C.D. 237 c.

³ *MSS. Hist. Miss.*, chap. 17, book 9.

⁵ Fr. Felix, 15.2.1655, O.C.D. 237 i.

In 1657 Fr. Dionysius was still expressing his anxiety over the decision they expected to be taken in Rome: all they in Isfahan knew was that the Procurator General of the Order had:

"handed over the Chaldaean affairs to Cardinal Capponi. . . ."¹

Another five years, and he and others enthusiastic at Isfahan had died at their posts: with them the subject drops from correspondence.

But, to complete the historical narrative, Mar Shimun V (1670) wrote to Pope Clement X: after the election of Mar Shimun VII (in 1738) no further attempts were made by his successors settled in NW. Persia to renew relations with Rome. The Lazarist Fathers (of the Mission of S. Vincent de Paul) in the latter half of the 19th century and early years of the 20th did, however, gain considerable numbers to the Roman obedience and Faith. The Chaldaeans of that region round Urmi were, moreover, the quarry of other creeds and sects—the Czarina Maria of Russia was specially interested in one mission which had official Russian government support: the Anglican archbishop of Canterbury's mission, disposed of ample resources and had able missionaries, some of them learned in the Chaldaean liturgy and tongue: there were Nonconformist sects deriving support from the United States, as well—all disputing the field for proselytes. In the bitter frontier fighting of the 'constitutional' struggle in Azarbaijan, before the Great War of 1914, in Simko's rebellion, much of the agricultural prosperity of the region round Lake Urmieh was destroyed: and having made common cause with the Allies in the War of 1914 large numbers of the Nestorians drifted to 'Iraq, where they formed part of those "Assyrians" under the Mar Shimun of the day, whose fate and assistance became a political and economic problem for the League of Nations.

The Catholic (Uniat) section of the Assyrians was hardly touched by those untoward events in 'Iraq: and their small community in the new Iran is now being rebuilt and fostered.

To return to the Nestorian Chaldaeans of Diarbakr,

"the patriarch Simeon bar Mama was succeeded in 1576² by Ilyas (i.e. Elias) Simeon "Denha, who in 1586 sent to Pope Sixtus V a profession of faith, which was judged heretical. "Elias II, 1591–1627, took up again the question of reunion and in a letter to Rome (1610) "complained that he and his people were regarded as heretics by the Franciscans of the "Holy Land. In 1616 he summoned a synod attended by eight metropolitans,³ in which "the Superior of the Franciscans at Aleppo, Fr. Thomas of Novara, took part: and in "preparation for this synod a delegation had been sent to Rome (in 1612) when the union "was consummated, although superficially; only a few of the Nestorians, such as the envoy "to Rome, Adam, and the patriarch himself perhaps were sincere.⁴ Elias III (1617–60) also "solicited the pallium from Rome, but his profession of faith was found unorthodox. . . ."

In his zeal over the Chaldaeans Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns determined, on his way back from the Chapter General in Rome in 1653, to visit Mar Ilyas III and influence him: a letter of 7.11.1653⁵ stated that he had arrived at Aleppo on the 4th and was leaving by caravan for Mausil, thinking that the Sacr. Congregation would be glad for him to have a discussion with that patriarch too. His report from Baghdad is dated, 2.1.1654:⁶

¹ Letter of 3.1.1657, O.C.D. 237 c

² Quoted from the article on "Chaldaeans" by the Rev. Dr. Labourt in the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*.

³ See in the appendix the Brief of 25.3.1614 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 9, p. 96, No. 282) addressed to the patriarch of 'Babylon', Elias; to Gabriel: to Elias archbishop of Diarbakr, James archbishop of Mardin, Chnon Jesu archbishop of 'Assyria', Joseph archbishop of Jazirat, Jesusdedit archbishop of 'Persia', to whom the Pope sent by Archdeacon Adam returning to Mesopotamia a gift blessed by being touched by the chains of S. Peter, or kept in the Apostle's Confessio, viz. a book of the Gospels printed in Arabic type for use in their churches.

⁴ See the Brief of 25.3.1614 from Pope Paul V to his 'Venerable brother Elias patriarch of Babylon' (Arm. XLV, vol. 9, p. 92, No. 281), acknowledging the letter sent by the patriarch through the Archdeacon Adam, and pointing out the various heads of Nestorian heresy. This Adam, so another Brief mentions, after daily discussion with doctors of theology in Rome had abjured his errors.

⁵ S.R., vol. 291, p. 527.

⁶ O.C.D. 242 c (see also his letter of 30.3.1654 to the Secretary, Sacr. Cong., S.R., vol. 292, p. 528).

"These past days, on my way through Nineveh (i.e. Mausil) I went to look for the patriarch of Babylon,¹ whom they call Mar Ilyas (Elias)—it is true that this journey only served to make it clear to me that this man has no inclination or desire for union with Holy Church. His ordinary residence is at a place called Alkush (Alkosch) two days' journey away from Nineveh, in the monastery which they call Rabban Hurmuz; but seven months ago, because of persecution by the Kurds he withdrew to a village called Tal Kaif, some three leagues distant from the town (Mausil) and there I went to find him. First, having greeted him, I explained to him the object of my visit was to renew the union with the Pope and Holy Church, which his predecessor (who was his uncle) had sought with such zeal and at such cost, when in the time of the pontificate of Paul V he sent his archdeacon Adam to Rome and on the latter's return summoned the synod of his whole community, in which all unanimously agreed to the union and to submission to the Holy See.

"It was about 40 years ago or a little more that that happened, and this patriarch remembers it well, because he is now a man of 70 years of age, and he became patriarch at 35. He told me, further, that he well remembered Fr. Thomas Novara, who on the Pope's instructions took part in the synod in question, which had so happy and good an ending.

"His reply to me was that those were other times, when they were not so hard pressed by the infidels as they are at present. I rejoined that without any difficulty or molestation from the infidels he could renew the union by writing to the Pope: that we would be at his service for the writing of the letter, and obtain a favourable reply for him." For an excuse he alleged that he was without his seal, which had remained at Alkush, when he quitted that place. I urged him once more and said that his signature would be sufficient; but he showed no desire to write. A priest, named Joseph, a man of some credit and repute among them, showed himself well disposed and on the following day took it on himself to discuss the matter with the patriarch again, and he too urged that the latter might write, even if he had not the seal. But the patriarch persisted in making excuses, alleging that it would be inconvenient that he should begin to write letters not bearing his seal, since anyone could then write or forge letters in his name.

"For your Reverence should know that it is an oriental characteristic that they cannot distinguish differences of handwriting as we can, and so it is the seal which differentiates, and guarantees the genuineness of letters. The truth is that the whole difficulty lay in his having no wish (for union) "as one easily perceived from the chilliness and little interest he displayed when he heard this business mentioned. May God give a better desire to his successor!

"This future successor is his nephew, because with them, as also among the following of Mar Simeon, the patriarchate is restricted to one family and passes always from uncle to nephew: and, even if he be only a child of some six years, he is brought up in perpetual abstinence from meat from his mother's womb: in this, as in all the rest of their observances, they are like our Chaldaeans of Mar Shimun. What is very good for us is that he admitted to me that he had no communication with Mar Shimun, and they do not even exchange letters of greeting, but each attends to his own affairs, without regard for the other.

"I discovered also in this village of Tal Kaif one abuse—too great a number of priests: for although this village was rather small, there were, according to what they told me, more than fifty and some so poor and so ill-kept that one would rather take them to be poor cowherds than priests. For among them (the Chaldaeans) there is no distinction in dress between ecclesiastics (even the patriarch) and laymen, as I remarked at Rome in the report I was ordered to make.

"The Christians of Nineveh (Mausil) are of a greater goodness and docility than any other Christians in these countries. There are about 500 families in this town—300

¹ The old title of the ancient Persian church was 'Katholikos of Seleucia'.

"Nestorian and 200 Jacobites. The reverend Capuchin Fathers had made a very good start when years ago they established themselves,¹ and they were making a good harvest among these poor souls. But the Devil was active and led them astray; the Fathers wanted to make some small cells for themselves: the Pasha seized the opportunity to allege that they were making a church without sanction, and he put them in prison: he did the same to the master-mason, who was a man comfortably well-to-do, but was left poor out of this affair, though, notwithstanding, he continued to be steadfast and a zealous Catholic. Seeing that he could do nothing to the poor Fathers, the Pasha levied a fine of 5,000-6,000 piastres on the whole Chaldaean community, and then drove away the Fathers. They say that they have since obtained an order from the Court in Constantinople that they re-establish themselves. But the poor Christians have been so fleeced and rendered so timorous by the past fine that it will be a difficult matter to do them the service one would like. I found some who had a liking" (for the Faith) "and retained in their hearts the seed of the good doctrine they had learnt from the Fathers, but they had so great a fear, that they were afraid to be seen looking for me or that I should look for them. I am sure that the best means the Sacr. Cong. could use to aid these poor souls would be to send some good missionaries—oriental—a Maronite for the Nestorians, and a Syrian for the Jacobites. Moreover this town (Mausil) has a hundred villages of Nestorian Christians around it, and others of Jacobites. That, reverend Father, is what I am able to write to you on this subject for the present. . . ."

Although properly speaking outside the scope of the 'Persian' Mission of the Carmelites, the subsequent history of this branch of the Chaldaeans or Assyrians had better be set down here.² Neither Mar Ilyas IV (1660-1700) nor Ilyas V (1700-23) resumed negotiations with Rome. Ilyas VI (1723-78) is said to have corresponded. It was left for John Hurmizd, the last descendant of the patriarchal family of Bar Mama, to go over definitely to the Catholic Church in 1830 and to take with him the see of Baghdad-Mausil and many Nestorians: he was proclaimed 'patriarch of Babylon' by Pope Pius VIII and died in 1838.

There had been for more than a century a third division, or subsection (which will in the 1740's come to the notice of readers of this work). In 1672 Joseph, the Nestorian archbishop of Diarbakr, following the advice of the Capuchin missionaries, withdrew from communion with the (Nestorian) patriarch, Mar Ilyas IV and was very active in organizing the union of his people with Rome. Innocent XI granted him the pallium (1681) and title of patriarch.³ The last of his successors, Joseph V (1779-1826), was only "Administrator" of the Chaldaean patriarchate: and then the whole of the Catholic portion of the Chaldaean race became merged in one under the patriarch John Hurmizd, mentioned above, and continues to this day under his successors, who usually reside at Mausil, although Baghdad is regarded as the principal city of their jurisdiction. In 1896 the Catholic Chaldaean clergy, secular and regular, numbered over 300: and the Catholic community in Mausil, Turkey and Persia some 66,000, approximately one-third of the Chaldaean race.

¹ Compare what Fr. Basil of S. Francis had written in 1639 (in Portuguese) from Baghdad, 11.12.1639 (O.C.D. 242 c.):

"I was in Mausil, which has many more Christians, and where at present two Capuchin Fathers are—not with a church, as it is not permitted, but they say Mass secretly in their house. The Chaldaeans and Syrian Christians have churches erected prior to the coming of Muhammad into the world. The Turks have a ban in this connection against anyone making a new church or helping to rebuild those ancient churches, which causes much trouble. . . . This law does not exist among the Persians, so that in that country we can act with more liberty: and thus the Capuchin Fathers, who 10-12 years ago came here to Baghdad when it was in the hands of the Persians, now that the rule of the Turks has begun have been ejected. . . . Here in Baghdad there are remains of many ancient churches converted to uses of the Turks. . . ."

Fr. Basil was greatly impressed by the Chaldaeans:

"Today, the first Sunday in Advent according to oriental reckoning, I prayed in the (Chaldaean) church in Arabic: it is very touching to see how in this time of Advent, always 25 days with these people, no person, however small or big, eats flesh-meat or fish or eggs or milk-foods or drinks wine. . . ."

² The data in the following two paragraphs is taken from the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*.

³ See a Brief of Innocent XI dated 25.10.1683 in appendix (Arch. Vat., *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 76, p. 20) in which the Pope wrote to this Uniat 'patriarch of the Chaldaeans', Joseph I, about the profession of Catholic Faith he had sent by the Capuchin Fr. Bonaventura; while the Brief of Clement XI dated 2.7.1701 (vol. 83, p. 133) styled Joseph II 'Patriarch of Babylon'—he had sent his priest Michael to Rome to express his regard for the Holy See.

Among the Chaldaeans a definite result is perceptible of the work of missionaries of the Catholic Religious Orders in making a channel of communication with Rome and a bridge for those of their spiritual leaders who were brought little by little, by God's grace, back into the path of unity, from which the former great Church had strayed over a thousand years previously.

* * * * *

* * * *

In yet another direction connected with the Middle East the remarkable zest of the Sacr. Congregation and the missionary Orders during this half-century for exploring avenues for possible enterprise may be noted from Carmelite letters, though the Carmelites were not directly interested. About 1645 the Sacr. Congregation had dispatched two priests to ascertain the facts about a race

"living near Samarqand, called Kalmas" (i.e. Kalmaks) "conjectured by some to be 'Christians: 300-400 families of them were settled near Astarabad in Mazandaran,"

and the Prior of the Augustinians at Isfahan mentioned in a letter that

"for the past four years they had had in their House at Isfahan the two priests sent for 'this mission.'"¹

With his keenness for any pioneer work and journey of discovery Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns went into some detail in 1653² about:

"... the race called Kalmak, as to whom at present there is no certainty that they be 'Christians, and only conjectures are being made. The first to send notice about them 'to Rome was the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan in Armenia . . . to whom it was reported 'by an Armenian merchant, who had returned from those parts, that at a certain place 'he had found one morning the whole community assembled in a very large room, with a 'venerable old man, who was wearing on his head a head-piece resembling rather a mitre, 'according to what they said. The Archbishop had examined carefully the trader in 'question, and from his word conjectured that this race might be Christian. . . . The 'reverend Fr. Dominic, a Franciscan friar, was therefore sent as far as Khurasan" (Mashhad, capital of that province is meant) "which is a town with a large population on the 'borders of Persia, more than 30 days' journey beyond Isfahan, but did not go any farther. '... What made me hope for some good was that a Muhammadan 'Religious' (a Darwish, 'as they call them) from that town of Khurasan, who has roamed all Persia, assures me, 'as an ocular witness, that in the province of Mazandaran in Persia, in the vicinity of the 'town of Astarabad there are some villages of that race of Kalmaks. . . . This town is '24 days' journey from Isfahan and on the Caspian Sea. . . . Since, as everywhere in 'Persia, one can travel without let or hindrance, I have thought that some service might 'be rendered our Lord, because it would not be a little matter to win over those 400-500 'families. . . ."

This proved to be a false scent—no traces of those Nestorian propagandists of the early centuries have been identified among the Muslim Kalmaks—but a more notable development in the activities of the European Religious during the reign of 'Abbas II, again due to the initiative of the Carmelite Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns, was the campaign for baptism of moribund Shiah infants, so that they might as Christians pass directly into Paradise.

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 135, pp. 232, 292.

² 29.9.1653, O.C.D. 237 c.

One of Fr. Dionysius' long reports—thirteen pages of foolscap—dated 1650¹ narrates the way in which this work began,² with yearly results. Here only the abstract of results is taken from it:

'On 25.9.1646, when Fr. Balthazar of S. Mary was Prior of the Convent, the first case occurred: they had seen a youth called Gushtasp at Khairabad, ill for a long time past. They entered his house, but other persons were there, so they went away to return later and, though his brother and sister-in-law were present, whispered in his ear about his soul and the Christian Faith and, finding him willing, after having given him what instruction was possible, they baptized him. They learnt the next day that he had died suddenly that night: and enquiries from his sister-in-law showed that he had done and said nothing contrary to our Faith. In the autumn the Father returned to Khairabad and baptized there and elsewhere about a dozen, all moribund. Near the convent a small girl was baptized, but afterwards improved in health: however, within a short time she fell from a roof and died. On Christmas Eve Fr. Dionysius, going out into the street from the convent, met a respectable woman carrying a child which was very ill, and they baptized it there and then in the street: it lived till March.

'In 1647 the Carmelites had not yet begun to enter houses in search of sick, unless asked to do so: they baptized those to be found, 95 in all, some of them Jewish children; the Jews being very simple people willingly ask for the Gospel to be recited over the heads of the sick! In this year a Gabr (i.e. Zoroastrian) woman came with a sick child, and she herself with two other children wanted to become Christians. That autumn there was much sickness, and many children were baptized before death. Fr. Dionysius decided to extend his operations. There were 100 villages round Isfahan, and thirteen to fourteen could be visited in a day, it was thought.

'In 1648 120 children were baptized.

'In 1649 375 baptized: in summer and autumn sickness was prevalent.

(Many examples are given in the narrative of fortuitous finding of dying children; then, on Sundays Fr. Dionysius was given permission to go out of the convent and search for them.)

'In 1650 "up to the present 326 baptized".'

Inasmuch as it was impossible for him, or any other, to be certain that a child baptized would die, and as, if it survived and grew to puberty, clearly the parents or others would bring it up as a Muslim, thus causing the child unwittingly to become a renegade from the Christian Faith, some of the Religious had scruples of conscience regarding the moral and spiritual justification of the practice, which at that date (comparatively early in the history of Catholic missions), was evidently little known, for the Vicar Provincial, Fr. Dominic of S. Nicolas,

¹ His work is briefly mentioned by the Jesuit author of a small pamphlet entitled *Divers Voyages de la Chine et autres Royaumes de l'Orient, avec le retour de l'Auteur en Europe par la Perse et l'Arménie*, Paris, 1681, which was translated by Lt.-Col. Sir A. T. Wilson, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., and published in a *Bulletin* of the School of Oriental Studies: this Jesuit passed through Persia in March-July 1648, when the enterprise had hardly begun:

"I knew a Flemish Carmelite in Isfahan, called Father Denys, who was able in this way to send 40 little children, who died shortly after he had baptized them, to Paradise."

Lt.-Col. Sir A. T. Wilson had also translated, and published in the *Bulletin*, vol. IV, part V, 1925, a *Relation de la Mission des Pères de la Compagnie de Jesus, établie dans le Royaume de Perse*, 1659, by Père Jacques de Machault, S.J., which purported to be an account of the Jesuits in Persia during the time of Fr. Alexandre de Rhodes, S.J., and is a panegyric on that ecclesiastic:

"I am told, indeed, that a certain brother of the Barefoot Carmelites baptized during one year more than 3,000 children, whom Heaven took to itself forthwith by a peaceful death. . . ."

This Fr. Alexandre de Rhodes had been previously in Tonkin: his gravestone at Julfa was recognized by the Apostolic Delegate as late as the end of 1932, with the inscription that he died 5.11.1660, aged 68, after 40 years' work in various missions of the East (*vide Osservatore Romano* of 18.2.1933).

² O.C.D. 235 d.

17.1.1649,¹ from Isfahan submitted a 'dubium'—a 'doubt'—to the Procurator General of the Carmelites, Rome:

"... The object of the Father, who under the pretext of visiting adults, of whose conversion there is little or no hope, is looking for the small children of Muhammadans who are sick, and where he finds them in imminent risk of death, in place of the holy water and baptismal font of the gospel, he purifies them with the necessary blessings and makes Christians of them. Up till now the business has passed off happily, and in two years he has sent to Heaven more than 200 children of Muhammadans: all our writers, whom I have read, say that the practice is lawful; nevertheless there are not wanting some, both inside and outside (the Order), who say the contrary. Among ourselves the Fr. Vicar (Provincial) my predecessor . . . maintains that it is not lawful, and that the Church has no right to baptize without the consent of the parents, still more of someone in the utmost need and peril of death. . . . In particular the practice is opposed by a certain Dominican Father Paul" (i.e. Piromalli) "well known to Mgr Ingoli as a good preacher. . . . I suspect that he may have written, or will write, to them and protest. I wished therefore to forewarn your Reverence how the matter stands, and if possible to have some declaration from the Sac. Congregation that this practice is commended. . . ."

The answer to the 'doubt' was received in due course, and can be read in the report of the general session of the Sac. Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 13.2.1658:²

"The Secretary reported: 'In the reports brought by a Carmelite Lay Brother from the missions of that Order in Persia and in Syria it is stated that the people there are wont, when sick, to summon the Fathers to bless them and read the Gospel, which they greatly revere: and, since a great number of these cases are of children past hope of living, they (i.e. the Carmelites) have started a practice of baptizing them secretly without the parents becoming aware of it, and (thus) of sending the children to Paradise: they do the same, when they perambulate the villages, and they assert that in this way several thousands have been baptized. I have had some doubt whether it is proper to do this, especially as regards those who perhaps recover and afterwards reach adult age.'

"Reply: Some of their Eminences answered that this 'doubt' had been examined formerly by the Sac. Congregation of the Holy Office, and had been determined affirmatively—that it could be allowed. . . ."³

The procedure demanded care and skill and assiduity: the Religious had to be sure in his conscience that, as far as his eye could detect, each infant would not survive its malady and natural remedies prove unavailing: it was further necessary that the intention to make a Christian of the infant by the process adopted should not be suspected (in the majority of instances at least) by the parents or relatives and an outcry, which might have untoward consequences for other Religious, avoided. Fr. Dionysius and others were aided, however, by the impression prevalent among Persians, the poor in particular, that the missionaries possessed a knowledge of medicine: the saying of the prayers of the rite over the sick child, the meaning of which was hidden to parents and others, was accepted as coming from persons respected for a holy life, 'darwish' if not 'muslim': it was, so to speak, a 'talism' (or 'talisman', as the English form of the word is). It does make for marvel by anyone acquainted with a peasantry

¹ O.C.D. 237 g. see also Fr. Stephen of Jesus, 18.11.1650, O.C.D. 235 d, as Visitor General: "This causes scruples to some of us: and so we represent it to the Sac. Congregation and Holy Office to check. . . ."

² See *Collectanea S. Congregationis seu Decreta, Instructiones, Rescripta, pro Apost. Missionibus*, Rome, 1893.

³ The baptism of infants 'in articulo mortis' belonging to pagans or infidels has since become a recognized missionary practice: e.g. in 1932 for the vicariate of Alexandria (Egypt) 1,383 were so baptized "almost all of Mussulman families": in 1933 there were baptized "43,366 pagans on the point of death, and 112,643 sons of pagans . . ." in the zones entrusted to the French 'Société des Missions Étrangères': in the year 1931-2 in the Belgian Congo 50,268 baptisms 'in articulo mortis' (see *Osservatore Romano*). Father Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns would appear to have been one of the earliest pioneers on a large scale.

and tribes-people, still nearly three centuries later believing in the 'evil eye' and inauspicious signs in many parts of the country, that an 'unbelieving Frank' should have penetrated without harm to himself into the quarters of Shiah women, and always, it might well have come to be in their eyes, as a harbinger of woe. Indeed on one journey Fr. Dionysius baptized twins, who both died: and it is mentioned by the chronicler in MSS. *Hist. Miss.* that such a commotion was raised on the suspicion being bruited that he had accelerated their death, that he had to leave hurriedly. But some explanation of the tolerance, and often welcome, which he met is perhaps afforded by the note:

"the disinterested labour of Fr. Dionysius . . . was ascribed by the Persians to the Carmelites being paid to do this by the king, who has made a vow. . . ."

In 1652 Fr. Dionysius had, as has been read, to proceed as Procurator from the Mission to the Chapter General in Rome: Lay Brother Alexander of S. Silvester adequately took up and carried on the former's self-appointed task of love, so that from Baghdad Fr. Dionysius himself wrote to the Procurator General of the Order in Rome,¹ 16.1.1654:

" . . . Of Lay Brother Alexander's zeal and skill marvellous things are told: they are "continuing the mission to dying children with so much fruit that since my departure they "have baptized 2,500 (because there is great mortality of small children). . . ."

There is to be found in the Archives Nationales in Paris³ a manuscript, *Brieve Relation des Missions des RR.PP. Carmes en Syrie et en Perse, faite en l'année 1656, par Alexandre de S. Silvestre*, in which the Lay Brother in question wrote of the

"charitable works practised by our Fathers at the cost of much labour and fatigue, as they "are obliged to be almost always outside the convent during the extremes of heat and cold. "As they knew that I was somewhat versed in medicine they used not only to bring me "their sick children to the House, even the chief citizens, for some bodily remedy to be "given them and for me to read the Gospel in their presence. . . . I have baptized with "my own hands 2,916 children (Fr. Dionysius more than 2,000 with his own hands, the "other Fathers 900)—children in danger of death. When I went through the villages the "inhabitants, seeing me from afar, used to come out of their houses with their children in "their arms, each waiting for me to pass and begging me to touch their child with my "hands, or else that I should let them kiss my habit, others that I would put the 'book' of "the Gospels on their head. . . ."

This Lay Brother Alexander had been away from Isfahan, on business in India between 1654 and 1656,⁴ and immediately after his return to Isfahan left for Aleppo:⁵ there is little doubt but that it was he who went on to Rome and was the Lay Brother referred to by the Sacr. Congregation in 1658. His own baptizing must therefore have been done mainly before the middle of 1654. When Fr. Felix of S. Antony, 20.12.1658,⁶ reported from Shiraz to Rome that

"572 Muslim children were baptized between May 1655 and May 1658"

he could not have been referring to the Lay Brother, but to Fr. Dionysius.

The diversity of activities of Fr. Dionysius of the Crown of Thorns here so briefly recorded will have shown the reader that he was a missionary out of the ordinary: it is not surprising,

¹ O.C.D. 242 e.

² "Una pernicioso influenza"—the phrase used for 1647 in his report—so long ago was the scourge known by that name.

³ At L. 932, No. 6.

⁴ Fr. Dionysius, O.C.D. 237 c.

⁵ Fr. Stephen, Isfahan, 22.11.1654, O.C.D. 241 p.

⁶ *S.R.*, vol. 238, p. 58.

therefore, to read that as early as 1648 he had been selected by the Sacr. Congregation for nomination to the bishopric of Agra in India:

“ . . . At the session on 28.7.1648 the Cardinals considered that a bishop should be sent “to reside in Agra (India), and that Fr. Dionysius, partly on account of his knowledge of “Persian—which was used at the Court of the Mogul—should be appointed bishop. . . .”

Like Fr. Dimas, however, the stalwart Fleming would have nothing to do with a prelacy, being too devoted to the quest for souls. This is the tone in which he notified the Sacr. Congregation, 3.8.1649:¹

“There has arrived here some news or other that the Sacr. Congregation has been “discussing (what I can hardly write without blushing) making me Bishop of Agra. With “all humility I now beg that that may not come about: I do not put forward my inaptitude “for so great a charge, which I feel in myself to be greater than I could express or another “credit, because perhaps it might be that your Illustrious lordship out of your innate “goodness might think it came from some humility, which would be the simple truth.

“Only, with all due reverence I submit that God of his infinite goodness has been pleased “to open for me here a gate by which I can daily save some souls, which I fear would not “be the case elsewhere. On another occasion I wrote how throughout all the villages and “settlements near here (they are not less than 80 in number) these poor infidels admit me “to read the holy Gospel over their sick, and sometimes with such respect that it astounds “me, and on such occasions I am able to baptize as many infants as are sick to death. “At present I have rather more liberty from my superiors here to go and seek them out, “than I had in the past, and, were they to give me more, very willingly I should work “even harder. Just as they give me permission for a day, if they were to be pleased to give “it to me for several days, far more souls would be saved, because usually I happen to “find myself obliged to abandon everything when most promising, in order to return with “all possible haste (as I am instructed) towards the city. Were I to have permission for “a period of several days I should be able to go everywhere, to the more distant villages; “for here the poor peasant folk, who are the farther removed from the city, are of greater “simplicity and natural goodness and on the other hand this is a land of such security that “day and night one can go everywhere: and, too, these poor infidels usually offer me a “lodging with much display of kindliness.

“On the contrary I have no acquaintance with India: they are people of a different “character and other tongues; nor do I feel I have the skill to learn them. But not even “in Persia would I wish to be charged with any other duties than those of a simple mis- “sionary: . . . those higher positions would do nothing more than entangle my conscience.² “ . . . However, so as not to take up more of your time, I implore you once more with all “humility, for the goodwill you have for me (without my meriting it), that you will not “allow me to become loaded with a burden for which I have not the strength.”

A noble letter! He died at Isfahan, 25.5.1661,

“having lived about 27 years in the mission . . . and always given examples of rare “worth. . . .”³

* * * * *

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 217.

² See in Fr. Dominic of S. Nicolas, 17.1.1649, O.C.D. 237 g, the curious trait in Fr. Dionysius:

“Except for baptizing the children he detests dealing with adult Armenian and Persian men, on account of his “narrow-mindedness and scruples (lest it should make him blaspheme against them) he is neither tractable nor “adaptable. . . .”

³ Fr. Felix, 25.6.1661, O.C.D. 238 p.

It was to this reign also that the project of establishing a mission post at Kung is to be assigned: the centre of Portuguese trade in the Persian Gulf, a few miles along the coast east of modern Lingeh, the port attracted the attention of a Vicar Provincial fresh from Europe and new to Eastern affairs, Fr. Dominic of S. Nicolas, in 1649. He anticipated that thence the Carmelites would find a door to work among the Arabs on the opposite shore of the Gulf, in Hasa in particular where the Portuguese had planted their flag in a vague way. On his recommendation sanction would seem to have been granted by the Order, for in a letter of 4.12.1651 Fr. Stephen of Jesus wrote of: "two foundations having been accepted—Julfa and Kung . . ."; but the other Carmelites were sceptical—"small hope of results . . . that at Kung still less in results, but easy to work . . ."—and some antagonistic because of the abandonment of Shiraz, with which the proposal was coupled.¹ Evidently by 1654 the Definitory General had cancelled their approval, for Fr. Felix, by then Vicar Provincial himself, added, 20.6.1654:

" . . . recently a letter has come from our Father General, addressed to Fr. Stephen of Jesus, in which it was stated that our Superiors consider establishments at Julfa and Kung "useless. . . ."

Although in the course of the next seventy years Carmelites used that port for a Congress, for meetings and discussions, and like many other travellers also for taking ship to and from India or Basra, Kung was never an established mission post of the Carmelites (as can be judged from the further details and facts known, which are given in the section of this work dealing with the separate Residences). The Portuguese Augustinians alone maintained a foundation at Kung until the Portuguese 'Factory' and official representatives withdrew after the Afghan invasion.

It remains only to note developments by the other Orders in the time of 'Abbas II, and the episcopal situation. As to the Capuchins, representing the king of France and under his protection, in 1656 they founded a small House at Tabriz, which was to last nearly a century;² but at Isfahan they never maintained more than two or three Religious and, apart from their failure to effect a permanent lodgment in the Armenian stronghold of Julfa, little is mentioned in the correspondence examined. Fr. Raphael du Mans, who accompanied the traveller Tavernier on one of his journeys to Persia, in 1644³ with his learning in mathematics was welcome in Court circles. Fr. Barnabas⁴ wrote of him as:

"a Capuchin, who is a mathematician and is constantly with the greatest persons of the country. . . ."

The East India Company's records⁵ have it in a letter of 10.4.1696:

"Fr. Raphael had deceased at Isfahan, aged 83 years: he had resided at Isfahan 50 years. . . ."

Their other pioneer, Fr. Valentine from Angers, died aged 66 in November 1665, as another tombstone in the old cemetery outside Julfa still shows.⁶ As regards their foundation at Baghdad a letter of 14.6.1658 from Fr. Barnabas at Basra reported:

"In Baghdad the Pasha has put into prison the Capuchin Fathers, but used none of the wonted ill-treatment. Then he sent the Qazi to pray in their church, and at once had the church and everything pulled down, and has begun to build a rather fine mosque on the site of the said church. . . ."

¹ Fr. Felix of S. Antony, 8.4.1654.

² See Tavernier's *Voyages*, VI, 670, and book IV, 179.

³ No. 6207 in the catalogue.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 428, p. 139 *et seq.*

⁵ 12.10.1652.

⁶ See *Osservatore Romano*, 18.2.1933.

At Diarbakr the Capuchins became established from 1667 and at Mausil from 1669.¹

The Jesuits were the last of the Orders to plant themselves in Persia: and it is hard to conjecture the motives which led them to dissipate, and for a whole century, energy in a small mission in Julfa, isolated from other scenes of more profitable activities for their Society, when the field of work had already become congested after the arrival of the Capuchins. Notwithstanding introductions brought from the French Court it was the Polish sovereign, if anyone, whose interests they were to safeguard: and one is forced to the supposition that emulation with the other Orders was partly the reason for their coming.

Already in 1646,² Fr. Dionysius gave the information:

"On 2.1.1646 a Jesuit Father of French nationality (Fr. François Rigordi) arrived here "with the intention of taking a house in this city, but after having been here 15 days he "determined to go on to India. . . ."

"The Father had a recommendation from the Polish ambassador, from which, however, "he did not derive the assistance expected. . . ."³

Some years pass and then, 1.10.1653, the French consul at Aleppo, François Picquet (afterwards Bishop of Baghdad), wrote to Rome that Frs. Rigordi and Amatus Chezaud, S.J., had quitted Aleppo "a few months ago for Isfahan".⁴

They arrived on or about 30.6.1653 ("15 days after the Carmelites began to reside in Julfa, "i.e. Sunday in the octave of Corpus Christi"): for the first two months they were guests in the Carmelite convent in the city:⁵ and, 9.8.1653,⁶ it is recorded that

"Fr. Rigordi, bearing letters of recommendation from the king of France, had gone off "after the king of Persia then at Mashhad in connection with his relief of Kandahar: the "second Father is Fr. Amatus Chezaud, a very virtuous person, well read in Arabic and "very much more in Armenian, they say."

On 3.12.1653 the same Carmelite again mentioned them:

"Fr. Rigordi has returned from the Court, highly favoured with privileges not usually "accorded to guests—they are authorized to have houses at Julfa and Shiraz, as I have "myself seen in the Persian. This king has written to the king of France with many expressions of regard, saying the friendship of the king of France had always been esteemed "and desired by Shah 'Abbas, his great grandfather. The Jesuits have brought a portrait "of the king of France as a gift to the Shah—as the Capuchins had done in the case of "Shah 'Abbas I.⁷

"We Carmelites had been dispatched here mainly by His Holiness, and are known as "Fathers of the Pope's Majesty" (= "Padrian-i-A'la hazrat-i-Pap"): and we desire a painting "of the Pope for our church, and letters from the Pope to the Shah are always useful. . . ."

That particular letter of Fr. Balthazar was being taken to Europe by Fr. François Rigordi himself,

"who is returning to his superiors on business of their mission. . . ."

The small mission, for its size, was well provided:

¹ For Capuchin Missions generally see Fr. C. da Terzorio's *History*.

² O.C.D. 237 c, 2.3.1646 and see the published work, *Pérégrinations du Père Rigordi, S.J., édition du P. Carouzon, Paris,*

³ MSS. *Hist. Miss.*, chap. 20, book 8.

⁴ S.R., vol. 135, pp. 440-7, 141-9, 156-9.

⁵ Fr. Barnabas, 9.11.1653.

⁶ Fr. Balthazar of S. Mary.

⁷ Are these paintings of Louis Quatorze and Louis Treize extant in Iran today? is a question for the National Museum and Art Department of that country.

"The Jesuits, the latest to come here, have an income of 500 scudi, in addition to alms given. . . ."¹

After their expulsion from Julfa in the autumn of 1654 Fr. Amatus (Aimé) Chezaud and a lay brother of the Society of Jesus were given lodging in the Carmelite Convent in the city: a son of Maréchal Duc de Brissac, who had been making a world tour as far as China and Cochin China in the company of Jesuits, on his return through Persia

"left for Poland via Constantinople to represent to the king of Poland the ill-treatment received in Julfa by the Jesuit Fathers from the Armenians. . . ."²

Two years later, 12.5.1657, Fr. Barnabas made an allusion to some curious incident, not explained:

" . . . The Jesuit Fathers had a brusque reply from the chief Wazir ('Itimad-ud-Dauleh) of the king of Persia, when they presented letters from the king of France, the Emperor and Grand Duke" (of Tuscany). "He answered: 'I shall not let myself be deceived a second time: this is not the reply to the letters of the Shah which were sent him. . . .'"

The Jesuits evidently did not get back into Julfa and have their fixed residence in the Armenian town until after 1658, despite 'Abbas II's licence to them to acquire a house: for the *History of the Mission of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus established in Persia* as published by Fr. Jacques de Machault, Paris, 1659, terminates by mentioning that, according to news from Persia, dated 1658:

"Itimad-ud-Dauleh had renewed his promise to obtain for the Fathers a house for them 'in the Armenian quarter, about a league distant from Isfahan. . . ."

Père Aimé Chezaud died at Isfahan (or Julfa), 14.9.1664, and was buried with Fr. Alexandre de Rhodes.³ At his death Fr. Claude Ignace Mercier and Fr. Jean Baptiste Lamaze, aged 40, were left in their mission.

In regard to the bishoprics of Isfahan and Baghdad, the reign of 'Abbas II had opened with Mgr Bernard of S. Teresa (Duval), Bishop of Baghdad, living in Paris, and the Prior of the Augustinians his episcopal vicar⁴ to represent him at Isfahan: the Bishop had been authorized to remain in Europe for reasons of health, but on condition that he provided a coadjutor or suffragan. Infirmities did not, however, prevent Mgr Duval from undertaking a service for the French Court and being dispatched as a councillor of State to Catalonia (the Pyrenean districts of France) from 12.3.1647 to 12.5.1648 to assist in the reorganization of certain dioceses.⁵ He would not, it would seem, offer more than 100 scudi annually for the stipend of a coadjutor out of the revenue he derived from the endowment of the see of Baghdad: it was hardly surprising, therefore, that no one accepted the position: yet, 2.6.1650, Fr. Michael of the Holy Spirit, a Calced Carmelite, was nominated to it,⁶ though the choice does not appear to have taken effect. On 23.5.1652 Bishop Bernard executed a deed, by which he renounced in favour of his coadjutor the garden and house, but a number of effects enumerated were to be sent to the Bishop in Paris.

¹ Fr. Felix, 3.9.1654.

² Fr. Barnabas, 15.1.1655, O.C.D. 241 f.

³ See the account of the burial ceremony by Fr. Claude Mercier, S.J., in *Documents Inédits par Père Antoine Rabbath, S.J.*, Paris, H. Picard, 1905.

⁴ The Prior was appointed Vicar Apostolic [? sic] for Persia for 5 years by rescript of the Sacr. Cong., *vide S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 262.

⁵ Fr. Ambrose of S. Theresia, in *Hierarchia Carmelitana*, 1934, giving the short biography of the Bishop.

⁶ *S.R.*, vol. 135, p. 14. This volume contains over 100 pages of matter concerning the Bishop and the coadjutorship, and there are letters from the former dated, Paris: 16.3.1652, 19.6.1652, 18.10.1652, 2.4.1655.

In a letter in Latin, 14.10.1662,¹ covering a copy of a letter from himself to the Augustinians at Isfahan, Bishop Bernard of S. Teresa stated that he was obliged to sell all he possessed in his house at Isfahan to Monsieur Jean des Rousseaux, and authorized the Augustinians to hand over everything to that person's procurator, apparently the Dutch East India Company, or their agents. Through the Nuncio in Paris the Sacr. Congregation lodged a strong protest² with the king of France against the alienation of the premises and the real effects, and demanded restitution by the Dutch agents in Isfahan of the buyer.³ Moreover, this sale of the house and effects was not genuine, but feigned, according to a summary made in the Sacr. Congregation:⁴ and in 1666 it ordered sequestration of the income of Mgr Duval from the endowment of his see.⁵

This unsatisfactory state of affairs continued—it is true that at that date it would probably have been impracticable for a Catholic bishop to reside in Turkish Baghdad—until 30.6.1659, when the following minute by the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation reported at the sitting of the Cardinals:

“it has pleased our lord (the Pope) to confer the coadjutorship of Babylon with future succession (to the bishopric), *together with the administratorship of the diocese of Isfahan* in Persia, on Dom Placid du Chemin, a French Benedictine monk, whom Mgr the Archbishop of Toulouse had proposed⁶ most insistently. Now there remains to be determined by “your Eminences the difficulty of his stipend.”

And the rescript was issued:

“To the Nuncio in France, let him treat with the Bishop” (i.e. Mgr Bernard Duval) “and ascertain from him what he will offer for the stipend of the coadjutor. . . .”

The Bull of appointment of Mgr Placid du Chemin was dated 30.5.1661: he was consecrated Bishop of Neocaesarea.⁷ It was stipulated, however, that he should not receive the emoluments

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 231, p. 69.

² *Idem*, vol. 238, p. 123.

³ The funds, or most of them, for the purchase of the building in 1641 had come through or from the Sacr. Congregation.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 238, p. 278.

⁵ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 112. Already that year, 1666, and doubtless in connection with this dispute, the Sacr. Congregation had proceeded to have altered the arrangements for control over the considerable income accruing from the endowment of the diocese of Baghdad, as can be seen from a ‘Decree of the Sacr. Congregation held in the presence of His Holiness Alexander VII, 25.3.1666’:

“Since Urban VIII for a suitable endowment of the diocese of Baghdad or Babylon in the kingdom of Persia and for “the maintenance of its bishop applied 6,000 Spanish doubloons, coming from a pious gift of a certain lady of French nationality, to be invested in so many non-transferable ‘Luoghi di Monti’ (as appears from the Brief issued about it on “the 4th day of June 1638) in fulfilment of which there were purchased in the name of the Sacr. Congregation 107 “Luoghi di Monti . . . of the 3rd issue (of which in the year 1656 thirteen Luoghi were drawn, and their value then “invested in thirteen Luoghi di Monti of the remodelled 2nd issue) and 49½ Luoghi di Monti of the new 2nd issue, “the yield of which being reserved for the disposal of the bishops for the time being of that diocese, as can be seen from “the Letters Patent . . . and, since from experience it was seen that it would be more useful for the administration “and service of that diocese, if in the future the yield of the said Luoghi di Monti were drawn by the Sacr. Cong. de “Prop. Fide and its officials, and then by its or their hands paid to the bishops themselves or to their lawful procurators, “therefore His Holiness on the vote of the Sacr. Congregation decreed that the Brief of Urban VIII should be amended, “or at least the title-deeds of the said Luoghi di Monti, so that these should not only run in favour of . . . the Sacr. “Congregation as regards the capital sums, as they now and formerly do and did, but as to the yield also they should “stand at the free disposal of the said Sacr. Cong. notwithstanding the reservation mentioned above or any other power “whether in the Brief or in the Patents granting to the said bishops” (the right) “to claim the said yield, from whom it is “specially and expressly taken away by the present decree, the other contents of the said Brief to remain in vigour, and, “in case of a drawing, or amortization of the said Luoghi, as often as that may happen, the price must be re-invested “always in the name and form specified and His Holiness ordered that such was the method to be followed” (see *S.N.R.*, IV, pp. 21–8).

Briefly, instead of the Bishop of Baghdad being able to draw and receive *direct* the interest on the endowment sum, in future the sums due would be drawn by the Sacr. Congregation alone, and it lay with the Congregation to pay the Bishop what was considered due to him (and it will be seen that some later Bishops complained of reduced payment, and asked for the whole yield of the endowment).

⁶ The Sacr. Cong. had cause to regret the heed paid to the Archbishop of Toulouse, for the person recommended is shown by numerous documents in the archives, e.g. a letter to the Pope of 2.1.1660, *S.R.*, vol. 236, p. 202, to have been quite unfitted for the office.

⁷ Quoted from *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10, by the late Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M.

of his office until he had reached the place fixed for his residence and unless he remained there

"At Rome, 30.5.1661, a secret consistory was held in the Apostolic Palace on Monte Quirinale, in which His Holiness, on the proposal of Cardinal Azzolini, made provision for the diocese of Neo-Caesarea in *partibus infidelium* . . . in the person of Fr. Placid Louis du Chemin, priest and master in theology, of the Order of S. Benedict, who has made a profession of the Catholic Faith and has the requisite qualifications, and promoted him to be bishop over it and shepherd over it . . . and appointed him coadjutor with future succession in the government and administration of the church of Babylon or Isfahan of Bishop Bernard of Baghdad or Isfahan, who is afflicted with old age and ill-health, so that he asserts that he cannot leave France, where he has long resided. . . ."

A decree of the Sacr. Congregation granted Mgr du Chemin the right to retain the priorship of Our Lady of Charenton in the diocese of Rupelle (La Rochelle) and the assignment of 300 scudi from the yield of the 'Luoghi di Monti' in the city . . . for the suitable maintenance of the said coadjutor, if and when he betook himself to his residence.¹

Since Bishop du Chemin was also to be administrator of the diocese of Isfahan and reside there, Pope Alexander VII notified his appointment to Shah 'Abbas' II in a Brief, dated 16.7.1661, which after the usual salutations, ran:²

"But indeed We Ourselves . . . seize with ears altogether ready beyond others to hear these noble merits and particularly the outstanding example of that benevolence which You practise towards the Christians dwelling in those realms of Yours: and We welcome and embrace them with an exceptional emotion of very loving regard. Wherefore We earnestly pour out to the Most High constant prayers for Your good health, success and for all Your affairs to be prosperous and favourable in achievement, as in Your presence will better be able to testify Our venerable brother the Bishop of Neocaesarea, coadjutor of" (the Bishop of) "Baghdad, whom, as he is due to make his residence in the royal city of Isfahan. . . . We greatly beg You to treat with confidence and honour. . . ."

Between the newly appointed coadjutor, the Bishop of Babylon in Paris, and the Sacr. Congregation there followed a protracted correspondence and dispute over travelling expenses, the property at Isfahan, jurisdiction and title, Mgr Placid du Chemin showing evident unwillingness to leave for the East until at a session of the Sacr. Congregation, 30.8.1666, it was reported that he

"represented that he is already 65 years old and in poor health, nor has he the necessary knowledge of the language, so that, even were he to set out, it would be providing the diocese (with a bishop) for a brief space of time, and the money to be given him for making the journey would be fruitlessly spent. . . ."

On which the rescript was issued:

"Let Placid du Chemin be compelled to go to his place of residence: should he still decline to do so, let the Nuncio see to it that both he and the Bishop" (i.e. of Babylon) "resign the titles of the churches they hold: for another title will be given the Bishop. . . ."³

Another Brief of 1661, dated 19th November (see appendix, Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 64, p. 206) was also a recommendation for Mgr du Chemin, and in its first half identical in wording with that of July: they are given in its appendix for completeness, so that the

¹ S.R., vol. 418, p. 357.

² Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 64, p. 166, Alex. VII, ann. 7.

³ See *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, cited above.

student may be aware of the circumstances in which they were written for him to carry out as coadjutor to the Bishop of Baghdad, and due to reside in Isfahan; but, like a third, dated 28.9.1669 (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 68, p. 257) when he had succeeded as Bishop of Baghdad, they were wasted effort and could hardly have been sent out to Persia, seeing that he never made the journey.

* * * *

* * *

* *

Little more is to be gathered from the correspondence examined regarding the reign of 'Abbas II. Besides the overtures made from the French Court and exchange of cordial letters with Louis Quatorze—in this reign, too, an agency of the French East India Company at Gāmburun seems to have been first opened—and the stay of a Turkish ambassador at his Court, in 1647 Shah 'Abbas II received a Polish mission:

“The Pollonia ambassador likewise is gone, having received a *pishkash* of 35 Tomaunds “and one bale silke, and as much uppon his returne, while he is in the country he is to be “furnished with 60 horses and mules and 30 'abbasi per diem. . . .”¹

According to a letter of Fr. Casimir Joseph,² at the end of 1654,

“there arrived an ambassador, called Viscount Bellomont³ from the king of England to “the Shah of Persia for the farm and customs (receipts) which the English share, half and “half, with the Shah in Bandar Gāmburun; but the poor ambassador found himself altogether “obstructed, meeting with hardly any reception from the Court, the other English of the “opposite party having put a spoke in the wheel. . . .”

That refers presumably to rivalry of the various ‘East India’ trading organizations before their merger. Of interest it is also to note the Capuchin Superior at Baghdad, 1.3.1662,⁴ suggesting in a letter to the Pope himself that:

“it would be useful to request the Queen of England” (i.e. Henrietta Maria) “to ask the “king, her son, to enjoin on all presidents in India and masters of ships and merchants “to favour the missionaries as much as possible, and in particular notify the governor at “Basra that the king of England has taken the Carmelites under his special protection. . . .”

In this reign in 1665 the traveller, Sir John Chardin, whose work is still so widely read, made his first visit to Persia: his estimate of the population of Isfahan, 600,000, much in excess of that calculated by Tavernier, suffers probably from the well-nigh universal defect in Persia of numerical exaggeration in estimates. The rate of interest prevailing (1655) was 7½ per cent, low in comparison with terms 250 years later. As to Tabriz, it was stated that

¹ A Persian word wrongly used, as *pishkash* is for presents from an inferior to a superior: *English Factory Records*, Samuel Wilton at Gāmburun to President and Council, Surat.

² 16.1.1655, O.C.D. 236 l.

³ Henry Bard, born 1616, educ. Eton, Scholar King's Coll., Camb., 23.8.1632. Having travelled in the East, he became a proficient linguist: a Quran collected in Egypt on his travels is still preserved at King's Coll. Distinguished himself in royal cause, particularly at battle of Cheriton Down, where he lost use of an arm, and was taken prisoner: made governor of Worcester. Knt. 22.11.1643, obtained warrant for baronetcy 8.10.1644, created Baron Bard and Viscount Bellomont in peerage of Ireland, 18.7.1645. Accompanied Charles II in exile, and by him sent on embassy to obtain money from the Shah of Persia, and the Great Mogul: died 20.6.1656 apparently from heat apoplexy at Hodal, between Agra and Delhi and buried there (*vide Complete Peerage*, V. Gibbs). A younger daughter was named ‘Persiana’ and died 1739.

⁴ S.R., vol. 236, p. 245.

"in the second half of the 17th century it was the second city in Persia with 550,000 inhabitants, 15,000 houses, 300 caravansarais, 200 mosques."¹

Like his great-grandfather and namesake, 'Abbas II appreciated European painting, and perhaps tried his hand at the art:

"It would be a good move to send out a Religious who can paint, because the Shah of Persia is very fond of painting and likes to paint himself. . . ."²

Again, from another Carmelite, 21.6.1655:³

"Nothing could be more useful to the Mission than if we had here a good painter, the Shah taking great pleasure in painting: and in these countries good artists are rare. There is a Dutchman who works for the Company, who has done very little, and yet he has received very good rewards, and the Shah has conferred great favours on him. . . ."

And Fr. Vincent Mary of S. Catharine of Siena, returning from India, 10.9.1656,⁴ wrote:

"The Fathers in Persia wanted to have Lay Brother Louis (of S. Francis) for their service, so that with his painting he might bring them into the good graces of, and favour with the Shah, who is mad (*impazzito*) on that art. . . ."

'Abbas II died at Damghan in north Persia, 25.9.1666,⁵ and was buried at Qum, where his father lies—not yet 33 years of age, therefore, by solar reckoning, having reigned 24 years and a few months.⁶ It is noteworthy that his life-span should have been—within a few months—almost identical in length with that of his father. With all his tenacity in the years of the operations round Kandahar and his interest in painting, already, 20.8.1660,⁷ it was being said about him that:

"the king is so much intent on sensuality that he does not think anything about his kingdom. . . ."

Unless there be a confusion with his remarks on the death of Shah Safi, the compiler of MSS. *Hist. Miss.*⁸ appears to imply that 'an inflammation of the throat coming from excessive drinking' was the proximate cause of 'Abbas II's death: "for the rest," the MSS. adds, after touching on his vices, "he was a just, liberal and magnanimous monarch, lover of the Franks, who let the missionaries alone"—which overlooks (not alone among European writings on the period, and not unnaturally in a compiler who had never been in Persia, and wrote seventy years after the event) that these tributes are gainsaid and contradicted by the religious oppression of subject-peoples in this reign.

*

*

*

*

*

¹ Chardin, vol. I, 133-84. Jean Chardin, born 16.11.1643, started on his first journey 1664, arrived in Persia 1665, returned to Paris 1670: left Paris for a second journey 11.8.1671, remained at Isfahan from 24.6.1673 to 2.2.1674: he was again at Isfahan, 2.7.1674 to 18.5.1675, and left the country via Bandar 'Abbas, 22.10.1676.

² Fr. Felix of S. Antony, O.C.D. 241 k.

³ Fr. Casimir Joseph.

⁴ O.C.D. 242 a.

⁵ See Père Raphael's *Récit du Royaume de Perse* in the Archives Nationales of Paris. Claude Barbin in his book of 1671, p. 141, *Le couronnement de Suleiman III*, wrote: "As the result of a debauch he fell ill at Khur [? *sw*] while returning from Qazwin, and died four days later. . . ."

⁶ Not died in 1668, at the age of 38, after a reign of 27 years, as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th edition, was so inexact in stating.

⁷ Fr. Francis of the Passion, Shiraz, S.R., vol. 238, p. 62.

⁸ Chap. 26, book 9.



SHAH SULAIMAN

A miniature in the collection of A. Chester Beatty, Esq.

[By his kind permission]

REIGN OF SHAH SULAIMAN (1666-1694)

IT WAS, no doubt, of Safi Mirza, whose regal name, after he was raised to the throne, became Sulaiman, that the Factors of the East India Company at Gāmbnun noted in their diary on 8.5.1648

“the king is made father of a young son”

Claude Barbin in his book of 1671, *Le Couronnement de Soleiman III*, stated:

“Soleiman nasquit l’an de l’Egire 1057, son père étant alors âgé de 18 ans, d’une esclave “Circassienne ou Cherkas” (Niqaat Khanum by name).

The year 1057 A.H. began 6.2.1647 and ended 26.1.1648. Bearing in mind the date of the reception of the news at Gāmbnun one may reckon therefore that the new sovereign was born in January 1648, if not at the end of 1647: clearly he was over 18½ years of age by the Christian calendar at the time of his accession, as ‘Abbas II died 26 Rabi’ II, 1077 A.H. = 25.9.1666.

The MSS. *Hist. Miss.* relates:¹

“Shortly after his accession he fell ill. First of all the people, nobles and governors were “bled” for money, which was passed in a barrel for eight nights over the head of the king “with the words: ‘This money is sacrificed for the good health of our lord the king.’ Even “the Armenians had to pay 50 Tumans. This perquisition was made twice, the second time “in August. But, as the king did not recover good health (in fact, it was never perfect), “the doctors were blamed: they in their turn blamed the astrologers for having made a “mistake in casting the horoscope from the time the Shah ascended the throne. So they “thought to correct this by a piece of buffoonery. Having discovered, to their notion, an “unlucky day to be followed by a lucky one, they placed a Gabr,² who boasted of being “descended from Rustam, on the throne, clad in royal robes with, behind him, a statue in “wood resembling him. The nobles came to do homage to him as long as the hour was “unlucky, but, when it became lucky, the Gabr fled and one of them cut off the wooden head “with a sword. Then in ordinary clothing appeared the king who, sitting on the throne, “was robed and placed there with the name of Sulaiman. . . .”

As to his appearance, more than twenty years later Père Sanson, the secular chaplain of Mgr Pidou from the Seminary for Foreign Missions at Paris, who after a few years only spent in Iran left on 30.10.1692 to return to France and subsequently published in Paris, 1694, *L’état présent du Royaume de Perse*, is the authority for the following:³

“ . . . He was tall, strong and active—a fine prince, a little too effeminate for a monarch “—with a Roman nose, very well proportioned to other parts, very large blue eyes and a “middling mouth, a beard dyed black, shaved round and well turned back, even to his “ears. His manner was affable but nevertheless majestic. He had a masculine and agree- “able voice, a gentle way of speaking and was so very engaging that, when you had bowed “to him, he seemed in some measure to return it by a courteous inclination of his head, and “this he always did smiling. . . .”

¹ Chap. 26, book 9, O.C.D. 284.

² The vulgar Persian name for “Zoroastrian”, i.e. one professing the old pre-Muhammadan religion.

³ Quoted by (a) *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and (b) *Études Carmelitaines Historiques et Critiques*, 1926.

There was, however, a darker side to Shah Sulaiman's personality and influence, as will be shown from accounts by eye-witnesses with a much larger, day-to-day, experience of affairs there than had Père Sanson or European travellers: from those recitals of contemporaries in this quarter of a century under review there emerges an impression of a deterioration from the autocratic but highly individualistic government of 'Abbas I and his grandson; and the venality of courtiers and officials begins to dominate, as it continued until the present century; while in cruelty Sulaiman equalled, if not surpassed, most of the Safawis who reigned. There are besides numerous indications of Muslim prejudices of the population being given that anti-European complexion which, if not altogether non-existent, did not have much weight in the first half of the seventeenth century, but which since have marked the life of the country till present days.

No warlike measures are to be noted in this reign, except for such secondary affairs as that of 1669:

"... the king of Persia has some business with the Uzbaks, who have been raiding, but
"there is no open war . . ."¹

and when, in a letter of 14.4.1682,² Bishop Picquet wrote from Abranar in Nakhchiwan of "the war started by the king of Persia against the Georgian"; while seven years later, 18.6.1689, Fr. Elias remarked:

"... There are not lacking disturbances on the frontiers by the Uzbaks and the
"Georgians, the former raiding and ravaging, the latter in union with Shah Nazar Khan,
"a Georgian prince, who has arrived from Muscovy and already subjugated a part of Turkish
"Georgia. . . ."

In the letters of Religious serving in Persia, that are extant, no reference has been observed to any special persecution of the Carmelites at Isfahan in 1667 or 1668, such as is alleged by one writer³ in the statement that a manuscript chronicle at Warsaw recounts:

"in order that the Muhammiadan persecution of the Discalced Carmelites at Isfahan should
"be brought to an end, king John Casimir of Poland sent at the beginning of 1668 an embassy
"with a letter addressed to Shah Sulaiman . . .";

but Sulaiman had been some five years Shah when an indication of the measure of intolerance prevailing is afforded in a letter of 27.4.1671 expressing the hope:⁴

"... God grant that the news of the Portuguese force from Goa being due this year in
"the Persian Gulf to recapture Masqat" (be true) "for the present Persian government is
"greatly feared by all Christians, because the king is supine in governing, while the chief
"minister, 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, is the sworn enemy of Christians . . .":

and again: "... The present government is degenerating into being a tyranny."⁵ A year and a half later⁶ the same Carmelite wrote more forcibly:

"Since this king" (came to the throne) "Persia has been a country where tyranny,
"opprobrium and persecution is the lot of Christians: would to God this were, to be exact,
"in odio fidei (in hatred of the Faith); but it is mainly from motives of avarice, and of rage
"against our uncleanness (as they call it), without alleging or making enquiry into the reasons
"why we are 'unclean'. In this connection, a bishop or Vartapet of the Armenians having
"publicly become a Muslim, from that time onwards with one accord in the streets they call
"out after all Christians and Religious: 'Dog! become a Muslim': and the little children in
"the streets shout 'Cursed be the Franks'.

¹ S R., vol. 434.

² *Idem*, vol. 486, p. 20.

³ *Études Carmelitaines Historiques et Critiques*, 1926, p. 193.

⁴ Fr. Angelus, O.C.D. 236 i.

⁵ *Idem*, 28.4.1671.

⁶ *Idem*, 1.10.1672.

"The chief Armenian archimandrites have been put into dungeons with irons on their legs, and the churches in Julfa have been condemned to pay 400 Tumans every year (1 Tuman = 15 piastres). This persecution of the Armenians and the ill-treatment of the 'Franks'—even of an officer of the king of France!—who do not dare to appear at the Court, and are treated by the masters of this country like dogs, and cursed for blackguards and rogues, has put fear into the vitals of all the Religious. . . . Blessed be God, who has permitted that this chief minister, the cruel persecutor of Christians, has been recently disgraced. . . ."

On 12.11.1672 he remarked:

"The captain-general" (i.e. of the Portuguese Armada) "sent to the Shah an Augustinian Father, called Fr. Manuel: after having been here two months he has done nothing, the more so as the king is always busy drinking, and at this Court there is neither anyone who governs, nor any order—everything makes for oppression of Christians. . . ."

That there had been later developments as regards the Armenians is indicated in a letter to the Sacr. Congregation from the Superior of the Capuchins at Isfahan, Fr. Raphael du Mans¹—for one matter, the prohibition of Shah 'Abbas II's reign had been revived in or about 1673:

"... our (Capuchin) Fathers, as also the Carmelites and Augustinians, have remained in the City, and the king did not order them to leave it, as he had done to the Armenians, whom he has even prohibited from coming into it to sell their wares: this bigotry of the Persians has been daily increasing, and the political favour, which formerly used to attend the Armenians, has altogether melted away and disappeared: and only self-interest has kept them from dealing with the Franks."

By 1674 the news had reached Rome and reference been made in a General Session² of the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide, 26.6.1674:

"It having been reported by Cardinal Nino that the king of Persia had caused more than twenty of the chief Armenian merchants living in Julfa to become renegades . . ."

their Eminences considered that the absence of the Bishop of Baghdad from the place of his appointed (temporary) residence, Isfahan, might be in part responsible for persecution having gone thus far.

In May 1678 the spirit of persecution flamed up again in worse form and, in one of his vivid Latin epistles, Fr. Elias of S. Albert wrote from Isfahan, 29.7.1678,³ of the pass to which things had come—not that libertinage in that decade was unknown at European Courts, they were riddled with it: still there it did not prevent strong government and material progress:

"It is not meet to keep silence regarding the state of this unfortunate country, because with the king indulging in Bacchus and Venus and the officials altogether intent on making money for themselves, it is miserably abandoned.

"At one and the same time the king gives audience to those banqueting with him and those serving his debauches: at their suggestion the wrath of the king or his favours are dispensed: and there is no one who dare to interrupt with more sober advice the drunken and raging man. Cruel and unjust edicts are issued, which according to the law of the Medes and Persians it is not permissible to gainsay. To these evils there has to be added

¹ S.R., vol. 444, p. 224.

² Acta for 1674, p. 181, vide *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10, by late Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M.

³ S.N.R., I, p. 343.

"insatiable avarice, the seeking of profit at every opportunity. Corn stored in the royal granaries is sold at such a price that his toil will not be sufficient for the food of the poor man. When all are groaning at the unhappy fate of the country the king like a Sardanapalus continues to glory in his splendour and thinks himself greater than Solomon.

"... As all were apprehensive of a great barrenness of the soil from a protracted drought, a general dearth of corn being already experienced, everyone began to pour out prayers to God, each in the fashion of his own religion to implore the gift and succour of rain. But certain zealots of the Muhammadan faith anxious, as they had been unable to obtain anything from God by the rites and prayers enjoined on their own sect, lest possibly some more fortunate result should happen to be attributed to the votive offerings of another religion, complained to the king that the Jews and the Armenians by the unbounded licence of their tenets had contrived the harm of the Muhammadan faith, and brought to naught the national religious rites with alien sacrileges.

"So the Shah, not in possession of his wits, admitting as a serious crime what he had heard exaggerated by the pretended sincerity of the false accusers, orders on the 10th day of the month of May" (1678) "those of the Jews, whose flight could be forestalled, to be seized and, with a hasty sentence of his furious temper, that the abdomens of their principal men should be ripped open—which was at once put into execution. The bellies of the Rabbi or priest of the Hebrews and of two of their chief men having been slit open, they perished: and their corpses, thrown out into the great royal square, called the Maidan, lay for a week unburied, while for a burial permit a tax of four Tumans was being levied for each. Then for the rest of them" (the Jews) "fetters and chains were waived on payment of a fine of 600 Tumans (one Tuman is 15 scudi, or piastres).

"But the Armenians, who were involved in the same accusation and were in peril of being generally slaughtered, having a certain grandee to protect them with the king, obtained pardon by paying some hundreds of Tumans as the price of their remaining unharmed.

"As a cloak for the deed the tale was bruited abroad that sorceries had been devised for the destruction of the king and the kingdom, to wit on the road leading to Shiraz the skull of a living ass, which going up and down the road, with flames pouring out of it from light lit inside, was carrying about a dry gourd scooped out, in which there was a small cat: and this, when it died, the king's death and other similar disasters would follow. . . ."

A new Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites, Fr. John Baptist of S. Joseph, from Bandar 'Abbas a year or so later, 15.2.1680,¹ enquired of the Sac. Congregation in Rome whether a practice he had found was permissible or not—a practice which sheds more light on the persecution and villainies done:

"In Persia the Catholic Christians make a practice of marrying off their boys and daughters at the age of 7 or 8 or 9 years: and the reason they give for this is because, if they are not married, often the Shah takes them for his own saraglio, which he does not do when they are already married. Thus the espousals take place very often when the children are barely born, because, the Catholics being insufficient (in numbers) to provide all the matches, they are obliged to marry them to schismatic Armenians. . . ."

"The whole country is peaceful: the king lets some of his officials govern, who are very bad to the Christians,"

was a remark in a letter of 25.9.1681² from Isfahan by Fr. Fortunatus of Jesus Mary, who expanded it some two years later,³ as follows:

"The kingdom of Persia is at peace: and there is no appearance of the king making war

¹ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 471.

² *O.C.D.* 237 k.

³ Letter of 20.2.1683, *O.C.D.* 237 k.

"on the Turks, as he is effeminate and given over to pleasures of the flesh. Some days ago 'he took 25 Armenian girls for his concubines and has made them Muhammadans. He 'allows the Religious to live in peace, but has no regard for them nor even for ambassadors 'from Europe. . . ."

Bishop François Picquet of Baghdad has left a more detailed description of the way in which this 'rape of the Sabines' occurred in his letter from Isfahan to the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacr. Congregation, 25.3.1683:¹ readers will recollect how Shah 'Abbas I on 16.1.1620 had been to watch the Epiphany ceremonies of the Armenians on the river bank and was so interested as to act as 'master of the ceremonies': with his descendant the interest had a different motive, or, at least, effect:

"Some time ago" (i.e. in February 1683) "there happened here something which 'caused sorrow among the Armenians and deserved tears. They have a custom at their 'feast of the Epiphany to bless the water for the baptismal fonts, and for greater solemnity "they go very often to bless the water in the river, not only by a simple blessing, but also "by pouring into it the sacred oil: and they perform this ceremony with such pomp and "circumstance that all the people of the city flock there. The king himself has been there "at other times to see those Christians throw themselves after the benediction into the cold, "icy water and bathe together, playing and laughing and indulging in tricks, while the "bishop and all the priests robed in copes stand on the banks of the river, they too laughing "at the foolishness of their people.

"This king, wishing to enjoy that sport in the company of his ladies, who number over "500, ordered that the Christian women and girls should come to one of his palaces, or "gardens, outside the city, where there are magnificent water-tanks and fountains, giving "instructions that the very same ceremony should be carried out by the women and girls "clothed in the copes, dalmatics and vestments of the priests, and that they should learn "the ceremonies of the blessing well from their husbands and fathers. The order was "executed: the women and girls came to the garden clothed in the vestments of the priests: "they did what they could in the water. The king with his concubines enjoyed it and "immediately afterwards gave them all a banquet: and at the end sent back the greater "part of those women, keeping only a hundred of the more pretty and youthful, whom he "retained in his palace for five or six days. Then, making a second selection of twenty- "seven, he sent the rest to their homes. These twenty-seven are without any hope of return- "ing ever: some of them are married off, the others not. At once a command was issued "for them to be dressed in gold and silk stuffs, and their own clothes should be sent back "to the houses of their relatives together with a little money for the poorer ones, none for "the richer. One of the principal men in Julfa has laboured with all his might to get back "his daughter, offering a thousand Tumans; but it was not possible. The final and greater "disgrace is that they have been made to profess the Muslim faith, some of them by trickery, "some by force. Each one is shut up in a little room, working away at sewing or some other "labour, deprived of all liberty, even of visiting and speaking to the others, save with the "permission of the eunuch deputed to stand guard over them, which he gives very rarely, "more often chastising them with his stick—more sharply still, should any of them be caught "making the sign of the cross or praying in Christian fashion. Although in the king's "house, these poor victims are not raised to the throne, not even taken to his bed, except "for perhaps two or three of them of exceptional prettiness. All the rest will be given in "marriage to his servants, even to some of the lowest and vilest of them. This the Shah "does, considering that thereby he is doing service to God, and deceived by his Mullas or "chaplains, who praise such deeds as being pleasing to heaven and to their prophets "Muhammad and 'Ali. From this first misfortune there ensues another very onerous for "all the relatives, viz. the loss of the inheritance and household goods; because immediately

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 490, p. 252.

"a servant of the king, even if he be the humblest scullion, has married one of these girls, "he goes to the house of her father and mother and takes all the property, as being the only "real and rightful heir—a cause of the greatest ruin and desolation imaginable, so that "many fathers or brothers become Muhammadans in order to save their possessions. This "is the only way to prevent it, and remedy they have. . . . Francis, bishop of Caesaropolis, "Vicar Apostolic of Babylon and of Persia."

So much to correct any wrong impression derived from writers with a brief acquaintance of Persia late in this reign, such as Père Sanson (quoted by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* "kindness "to Christian missionaries"), regarding the opinion in which Shah Sulaiman was really held by the European Religious in Persia.

* * * * *

That iniquitous decree, to which Bishop Picquet alluded, making the transfer of goods and property a reward for those who apostatized from Christianity and a bait for the avarice of oriental Armenians, a trait all too prevalent among them, has been already met under 'Abbas I and again under 'Abbas II: and it was particularly damaging and bewailed in the 'Catholic' district of Greater Armenia called Nakhchiwan, lying between the Araxes and Erivan in the lower Caucasus. There have been and will be so many references in this work to this district and to the Dominican Fathers, who had pastoral charge of it, that succinctly the position in this Persian province (as it was till 1828) had better be here explained. The Church owed this enclave in the midst of schism to the Dominican Order. In the Pontificate of John XXII, the Blessed Bartholomew of Bologna, consecrated bishop of the province of Maragha, went there with a lay brother, Peter of Aragon, and about the year 1328 he was enabled by a nephew of a prince of Mingrelia, named John, who was Superior of a monastery and became impressed by the virtues and doctrines of the Dominicans, to bring it about that the Superiors of a number of Basilian monks, after meeting in council, proclaimed union with Rome at Karna, where a church was erected. Father John proceeded to have the Scriptures translated from the Latin, which he had learnt from Blessed Bartholomew, into Armenian: it is recorded that he was aided in the task by an English priest, companion to the bishop. The latter died in 1333, and later Father John, having been to Rome and compared the laxity of the Basilian Armenians with the monks in Italy, decided on his return to the Caucasus to create a new congregation. He chose the Dominican habit with a slight variation, and the rule of S. Augustine within the constitution of S. Dominic, giving his congregation the appellation "Uniates of S. Gregory the Illuminator of the Catholic Church" ('Frères Uniteurs' is the name commonly used in French), he himself becoming the first Provincial. This Congregation took root and spread in Greater Armenia, in Georgia and in the Crimea (then in the hands of the Genoese), where they set up a college at Caffa, afterwards celebrated. The invasions of the Turks and the Tatars appear, however, to have wrought devastation among the communities and in the tracts where this Order worked, so that they remained in strength in the district of Nakhchiwan only, and thence in 1356 they sent emissaries to the Pope and to the Master General of the Dominicans in Rome, praying to be admitted into that Order, and admitted they were. The archbishopric (which formed one of the dioceses of the ecclesiastical province of Sultanieh erected in 1318) continued to be recruited from the ranks of the Dominicans, who in Armenia from time to time received doctrinal strength in the persons of Italian friars from Dominican convents, while many young Armenian seminarists were sent to Rome for training in theology, languages and liberal sciences, in order to return as instructed priests to Nakhchiwan. In the course of the next two and a half centuries the friars, and the community of 'Frank' Armenians from whom they were drawn, suffered much misery and penury from wars and economic adversities, so that at one time the Congregation was reduced to 12 friars at Nakhchiwan

and a few elsewhere: the Archbishop had in the end to abandon Nakhchiwan for Abranar, three days' journey from Tabriz, and not a few of his flock became renegades to Islam. The French traveller of the middle seventeenth century, J. B. Tavernier, wrote¹ that in his day:

"in this region there are reckoned at 6,000 souls those who follow the Roman Church in 'all things except the Office and Mass which are said and sung' (i.e. according to the Latin rite and Dominican Observance) 'in Armenian, so that the people may understand it. 'The archbishop, being elected, is sent to Rome, where the Pope confirms the election' (usually but not always).² 'He has his residence in a large hamlet' (i.e. Abranar) 'which 'is one of the most beautiful places in all Asia: the wine and fruit are excellent, and all 'the necessities of life are found there in abundance. . . . All the rest of the Religious go 'off to work in the fields and vineyards from morning till evening, so that it is no wonder 'they are very uninstructed . . . there are some Religious who have a passable knowledge 'of the sciences . . . none the less they are good Religious. . . ."

Replying to a questionnaire, addressed to him by the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, 1.5.1666 and received by him 10.2.1667 in Aleppo, Fr. Felix of S. Antony, then Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites, stated³ in the course of his report that he had personally been a few years before that in Nakhchiwan, which was some thirty days' journey from Isfahan: he had seen about 4,000 Catholic Armenians, or 800 families: only one convent with some ten friars: the others living two or three together: the friars were supported by alms, and to some extent by keeping vineyards. Another description of the 'State of Armenia' of this year⁴ mentions that Greater Armenia had at one time seven Catholic bishops, now reduced to the one, Nakhchiwan; and less than 100 years previously (i.e. after 1567) twenty-seven villages of the district obeyed Catholic jurisdiction, now (in 1667) only ten:

"the inhabitants of the rest had become renegades, the cause being the impious law, by which 'any Christians becoming Muslim can claim the property of his relations however distant."

On the death of Mgr Matthew Erasmus, after twenty years' rule, in 1627, his coadjutor, Mgr Angelo Cittadini (from Faenza in Italy) succeeded, only to die in December 1630 of cancer in the far-off town of Yucatan in Mexico, where he had gone with permission of the Holy See to collect alms for the founding of a college for Catholic Armenians in Goa,⁵ leaving 12,5000 pieces of eight collected to the Pope for the purpose. For 23 years his successor, the Armenian Mgr Augustine Basrci, governed this diocese, and then came Paul Piromalli,⁶ the Dominican from Siderno in Calabria already mentioned in the reign of 'Abbas II, from 14.6.1655 till 15.12.1664. But Mgr Piromalli became involved in serious disputes with the friars, so that Fr. Antonio Tani, O.P., was sent there by the Master General of the Dominican Order in 1660, with the style of Visitor:

¹ Quoted by late Fr. L. Lemmens in *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5, Naxiwan.

² According to a minute made in the Sac. Congregation (S.R., vol. 480, p. 75) four archbishops of Nakhchiwan only had been created by the Sovereign Pontiffs without previous election in the arch-diocese, viz. Fr. Benedict, an Armenian by race in 1478 by Sixtus V, Fr. Erasmus an Armenian in 1617, Fr. Angelo Maria Cittadini of Bologna by Paul V, and Fr. Paul Piromalli of Calabria by Alexander VII in 1655. Then, in the Session of the Sac. Cong. on 12.11.1675, a Fr. Thomas, an Armenian friar, was appointed archbishop and the Bulls for his consecration dispatched to Nakhchiwan; but, exercising their privilege, the electors there had themselves chosen a Fr. Gregory and sent him to Rome for his election to be confirmed. so in the Congregation held on 10.3.1677 in the Pope's presence orders were given for Fr. Thomas' consecration to be suspended and for Fr. Gregory to come to Rome from Venice, where he had arrived and where he died shortly afterwards. Fr. Thomas was in 1678 examined by the Cardinal Prefect's order and found insufficiently instructed for the office (*vide* S.R., vol. 466, p. 259; S.R., vol. 459, p. 327; S.R., vol. 467, p. 27, on 1.3.1678). It was in these circumstances that Mgr. Picquet was directed to superintend the holding of a fresh election.

³ S.R., vol. 222, p. 163 *et seq.*, also quoted by Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M., in *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5.

⁴ S.R., vol. 222, p. 186.

⁵ See *Acta* of the Sac. Congregation for 1630, p. 162, 22.11.1630, quoted by *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5.

⁶ His 'Life' was written by Macri, *Memorie istorico-critiche intorno alla vita et opera di Mgr Paolo Piromalli*, Naples, 1824.

"During the time he stayed in Nakhchiwan he observed the exactions and ill-usage, to which Christians there were subjected by the Muhammadans, the former being also led to become renegades from the Faith, *not so much from the motive of desiring to be freed from this ill-treatment, as to get possession of the property of their relatives, which, by virtue of a law promulgated by the king of Persia, devolves on those who pass over to the Muhammadan faith.*"

"In order to rescue the people from being so harassed and to get rid of that inducement to apostatize, which avarice (a vice to which Armenians are very prone) caused them, Fr. Tani on his return to Italy tried to get various Christian princes to press the Shah of Persia to abolish the law in question. . . ."

"After he had obtained the letters (from the Christian princes) he returned to those parts and, though he did not succeed in getting, as desired, the annulment of the impious law, his efforts did not fail to bear fruit, inasmuch as the king of Persia ordered that all governors should be removed from their posts and that the people of that diocese should be placed under his own immediate control. As the result of such decision the Christians are spared the ill-treatment the governors used to inflict on them by heavy impositions, and the outrages suffered at the hands of tax-collectors, and they are relieved, too, of the burden of giving lodging to strangers at their own expense. The ease with which they could become renegades has been counteracted, seeing that at present, *in order to take possession of the property of relatives apostates must appear before the king and bring with them sixty (? sic) witnesses . . .*"

is the wording of a report of 1669 to the Sacr. Congregation.¹

On 14.5.1668 a successor to Mgr Piromalli was appointed in Fr Matthew Hovannes, an Armenian, of whom there are letters extant on his journey from Rome, and from Abranar after his arrival in his diocese, 26.9.1669;² at Erzerum, accused by the Turks of having things for the Persian Court, with two Carmelites his companions he was put in prison and spent 400 pieces of eight to be freed. In October he left Abranar for Tabriz, whence he wrote again,³ about to go to find the Shah in Isfahan, for he was the bearer of a Brief from Pope Clement IX.

"Archbishop Matthew of Nakhchiwan was given a reception here, as if he had been an envoy from the Pope; but he was treated in very miserly fashion" (presumably, in the matter of subsistence allowances customary at the Persian Court): "however he has obtained something . . ."

reported the Carmelite Fr. Angelus to Rome, 12.8.1670.⁴

Perhaps that "something" included a reply from Shah Sulaiman to Pope Clement IX, for that pope reigned only from 20.6.1667 to 9.12.1669: and it is known from his successor's Brief of 25.10.1672 (which see in the Appendix of Latin Briefs, as also p. 480) that a letter had been received in Rome from the Shah addressed to Clement IX, i.e. between mid-1667 and the end of 1669—a letter apparently not preserved in the Vatican archives.

Then in 1669, as a 'précis' made in the Sacr. Congregation relates:⁵

"Monsignor Arachiel, Armenian archbishop,⁶ has come to Rome to represent to your Eminences that, having constructed a church in Erivan with the help of Azariah the Armenian Catholic (a person well known to the Sacr. Congregation) where the Capuchin missionaries were to officiate, it had been demolished by officials of the king of Persia at the instigation of the schismatic Armenians, and the archbishop expelled and deprived of his emoluments. He begs for His Holiness to be asked to write a Brief to the Shah of Persia so that he may be given permission to build a new church in Erivan . . . and orders for there to be restored to him the revenues of the church of S. Gregory in that town. . . ."

¹ S.R., vol. 421, p. 119.

² *Idem*, 7.11.1669.

³ S.R., vol. 418.

⁴ 10.5.1669, S.R., vol. 423, and S.R., vol. 434, p. 167, 170.

⁵ See the Brief in Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, 67, p. 367: Fr. Angelus, O.C.D. 236 i.

⁶ He is mentioned as 'archbishop of Erivan' in 1667.

Accordingly Pope Clement IX wrote to Shah Sulaiman, 13.2.1669 (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 68, p. 150):

"We wished to follow in the train of Our venerable brother Arachiel, Archbishop of "Gheriam [*? sic* for Erivan) with a letter of Ours to Your Highness, asking that You will "deign to show him those signs of clemency and benevolence with which You are wont to "receive persons recommended by Us and which will be able to keep both him and the other "Catholics living in his archiepiscopal district safe and secure against plots and harm from "schismatics, who are constantly raging against them more than inimically with savage "ill-will and, where they are able, even with acts done. But first of all this same Archbishop "will desire that there be granted him by Your Highness the power of building a church "in the town of Erivan, which would be both a great comfort and of spiritual benefit "certainly to all the Catholics of those parts. But, if it would please the royal will to grant "that, it will more and more link to itself by a fresh and tight bond of goodwill Our high "regard already for long past obliged by its kindnesses. . . ."

Not at Erivan only in the northern limits of the Persian empire but in Georgia too the Latin missionaries—the Capuchins there—were being harassed and by schismatics of the Greek rite, not Armenians, so that the Sovereign Pontiff, 18.3.1668 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 67, p. 316) wrote to the Shah:

"We confidently beg that You will ordain that Fr. Stephen of Ameria and his Capuchin "companions be protected by Your authority and secured from the attacks of the schis- "matics of the Greek rite residing in that region. . . ."

Probably this was that Catholic Armenian Azaria, in whose benefit Pope Clement X addressed to the Shah his Brief dated 10.9.1672,¹ in which the phrase occurs:

"But as there has come to Our ears the unjust oppression, which Our beloved son, "Azariah Acaz of Armenia, has suffered in your realms on account of his zeal for forwarding "the Catholic Faith, We have wished to indite this letter to Your Highness that, informed "by it as to the harm done the said Azariah, You may add a new increase to Your outstand- "ing qualities by a splendid amends for the same.

"Assuredly finer titles to Your name there are none that You will claim than those "You have by famed proofs hastened to acquire through spreading Divine worship "within Your very vast dominion. Up! then, most puissant king, protect the militia of the "King of Kings from the reckless acts of hostile parties, quash the forces that rise against "them, and by the powerful interest of Your patronage bestowed on the Catholics and "specially on the said Azariah answer Our anxious prayers in a signal manner. In this way "You will surround Your royal head with a crown of true glory and so will pave for Yourself "a road to everlasting salvation. Now Ourselves gaining a mental foretaste of this inward "delight we do earnestly beg for Your Highness from God, the author of all good things, the "lengthy enjoyment of present happiness. Given at Rome at S. Mary Major under the "Fisherman's ring, 10th September 1672, in the third year of Our pontificate."

As to Mgr Arachiel, it is surprising to note that, in his pursuit of protection for his church in Erivan, he wandered from Rome to England. The Nuncio in Brussels reported to Rome, 4.10.1670:²

"That Armenian archbishop, Arachiel, was in England, where he had a very civil recep- "tion with his letters patent and letters of recommendation from various princes. He went "first to Amsterdam to take ship for the East; but, finding none, with the opportunity of

¹ Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, No. 70, p. 191.

² Arch. Secr. Vat. Misc. Arm. I, 17, p. 345.

"a passage he crossed to London, where he had heard a ship was being freighted for those parts. Fr. Howard¹ has helped him discreetly in view of the letters and certificates he brought from Rome and elsewhere: he speaks of him (Archbishop Arachiel) as a very good man, who had given no occasion for scandal in that capital, and he even gave him 100 scudi of his own, to help him on his journey. The king" (i.e. Charles II) "sent him off with a letter commendatory to the Shah of Persia (according to the copy attached),² and the Duke of York strongly recommended him to the master of the ship, which has already left. . . ."

Nor were the Popes deaf to the entreaties of this impoverished, humble little flock for protection against oppression, nor silent in protesting against the injustice of the edict in regard to apostates. This is a rendering of the Brief of 25.10.1672, addressed by Clement X to Shah Sulaiman:³

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. We have taken as an outstanding theme for gladness the letter sent by Your Highness to the late Clement the Ninth of happy memory, Our predecessor, and have learnt from it how admirable a regard You have for the Sovereign Pontiffs, whom our Lord Jesus Christ appointed His vicars on earth; and at the same time We have been informed of the notable favours and benefit, which You have conferred at the request of Our said predecessor on the Catholics residing in Your dominions—that is to say, in putting them immediately under Your royal control and government.

"We, therefore, who cherish from Our heart sentiments no different from those of Our said predecessor and, together with the high office left by him through death, have taken over the task of spreading the Catholic religion, repay from the Apostolic throne special thanks to Your Highness for the protection of the Catholics assumed by You, and We honour with tears shed Your benevolence in their favour.

"But We value so highly the declaration by which You have removed them from the control of others that We greatly desire such a privilege to be confirmed by You with an inviolable decree; still, because it is borne in on Us that Your royal beneficence is restrained by no limitations, We further earnestly beg of it that, favourably inclined by the indigence and poverty of the Catholics, You will of Your liberality remit the taxation lately imposed by Mirza Ibrahim and that You will be satisfied with the payment of that only which, equal to their strength, they were contented to pay to Your royal predecessors. In this, if You gratify Our wishes, You will not only have rendered more and more propitious to You Our goodwill, but Him Who has prepared in Heaven inestimable treasures for those

¹ The future Cardinal de Norfolk?

² Should it not be on record among the State papers in London, it may be of some interest to give here the tenor of this early instance of direct correspondence between the sovereigns of England and Persia (a copy of the original Latin text—Arch. Secr. Vat. Misc. Arm. I, 17, p. 343—is included in the appendix to this work with the Latin Briefs of the Popes). To be noted that at the Court of St. James they were not up to date with their information, for the demise of Shah 'Abbas had occurred four years before his 'brother' monarch indited the letters:

"Charles, by the grace of God king of Great Britain, France and Ireland, to the high and mighty prince, lord, sultan, Shah 'Abbas Khan, king of the Persians and Medes and of Armenia, Our brother and very loving friend, greeting and an increase of all prosperity.

"Most high and mighty prince, brother and beloved friend,

"As several monarchs of Europe have observed in the bearer of these letters, the most reverend Arachiel, archbishop of Armenia, a very great discretion and a singular zeal for Our Christian religion and have been to the trouble of moving Your Serene Highness in letters . . . in favour of his pious exertions on behalf of the church of his rite to be dedicated in the town of Erivan, We, unwilling to be behindhand in such a laudable business nor to fail the public weal, and trusting too that Our intercession with Your Serene Highness will have no small weight . . . gratefully acknowledging the favour of Your Serene Highness. . . .

(After reference to the "trade carried on by our subjects in the dominions of Your Serene Highness . . ."):

" . . . and We shall eagerly seize on the opportunities offered to deserve well of Your Serene Highness. For the rest, from Our heart we commend to the care of God Almighty Your Ser. Highness.

"Given in the Palace of Whitehall, the 8th day of August 1670.

"The good brother and friend of Your Ser. Highness. Charles R."

³ Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, 71, p. 63 (50), Clement X, ann. 4.

مکتبہ محمد الیہ عالمی سرتعلیٰ نہایت والا مرتبت فاضل طوطی اسطو فطرت و اثر شہود صاحب کو بلاطف و عطا کما حشمت و اہمیت قیام یک و نصف انت کتاب فضایل و کمالات

کتابخانه متناهی فضل و عجب انوار بنیالین محبوب کمال عالم مرآت خفیه و نبات سماویہ معراج شہادت با احسن و بلند افراغ عالمیہ میا و پادشا و صاحب کلا عظیلم الامت حرم رافع را تیرا و دست

عالمس ہر شے شکت فاعلاری ضد و مماثلہ السلاطین^۱ یتبعوا فاعل انواھیں^۲ در تبرین قوی کیساری بقی تعالیٰ فی عظمیٰ اعلیٰ و اعلیٰ عہد الزوال ابواب کجاست

برخسار مال و امانتی کشاده، و اسباب سرت مشا و مانی از سر جت میآید و آنگاه بود که صاحب بزم ترا نشاند و پیشال بحکم یک سیب را در دوشی قرار داد و باعث تراید جو روپ طکر کرد و ایشان

در باب غارش مطالب پوری از ارباب وادی اتوینا و سایر بخشین آنوالاشن مضامیری سکنه ولایت آذربایجان متروم خامه مولاته شده بود چنانچه اقصای رراک

ملک آرا و رضای آن زینت بخش سعادت و اعتبار بود مستر فرمود که بیکایک این عظام و امرا و وزرا و حکام ملک آذربایجان در بار ایشان بجل و در بند و آن

مختلف حکم حساب امتحان ایشان بنسبینه در برابر امداد و اعانت انجاعت بقدری رسانند انوالاجاه و همواره این شیوه پسندیده را مری و داشته اند

حیات و حالات و اظهار اوضاع و احوال که در حضور صواب داشتند که محکم است و درستی و موالات و فتح ابواب و در و مصافح و میوه و بشنید که در علیای پرست نام بر حصول اطمینان و حصول و معین و کرامات

سلطنت و جلالت و فضیلت و اقبال امانا

"faithful to Him, and We shall beseech Him to lead You to the knowledge of His Faith, without which no road lies open to eternal salvation, begging in the meantime Your Highness to receive with Your customary courtesy Our beloved sons, Azariah and Antony of the Order of S. Dominic, who are coming to You in Our name with a certain small gift, and heartily praying for You a long enjoyment of Your present felicity.

"Given at S. Mary Major, Rome, under the Fisherman's ring, the 25th day of October 1672, and in the fourth year of Our pontificate."

One of the few Persian letters of the Shahs preserved in original by those then in charge of the Papal correspondence is that giving Shah Sulaiman's acknowledgment of this Brief, to be found in A.A. Arm. I-XVIII, No. 761 (a photograph being shown on the opposite page).. A copy in twentieth-century Persian typescript is also given for convenience of orientalists: the extravagance of the alliterative and abstract terms in Arabic, with which the Pope is apostrophized, makes it out of the question for exact translation to convey sense, but the following is as close a version as possible:

"Pope Clement the Tenth,

"The friendly communications of His Holiness, liege lord of the greatest monarchs of the faith of Jesus, and governor of the mightiest Christian potentates, Pope Clement the Tenth, became the cause of an enhancement of friendship and good relations, and the means of an increase of pleasure and delight (received) in company with the best of his compeers, Francis Piskop, at a time when, by the grace of Almighty God and the power of ever-increasing good fortune, the doors of success and prosperity had opened at the display of (Our) wishes and aspirations, and when the ways of enjoyment and cheerfulness were provided in every direction.

"As to the remarks recorded by Your amiable pen in recommending and explaining the desires of Padre Azaria and Padre Antonio, the other co-religionists of Your Holiness, and the Christians residing in the province of Azarbaijan, We have ordained that the great viceroys, commanders, ministers and governors of the country of Azarbaijan should treat them in the same manner as was deemed fitting by the august opinion and consent of that illustrious occupant of the seat of honour and loftiness,¹ and that no one should cause them any trouble contrary to order and justice, and that they (the governors, etc.) should afford help and succour to that community in every respect.

"Your Highness should ever observe this laudable practice, and intimate the true condition of affairs, and state the aims and affairs You may have in these parts, thus strengthening the bonds of friendship and amity, and opening the doors of alliance and concord, so that (Our sublime) royal mind may be directed and exerted towards the attainment thereof.

"May Your reign, majesty and learning endure. . . ."

There is no date given in the body of the letter, nor is any paper attached to show the date of its handing over in Isfahan to the messenger, or of its receipt in Rome; but, since Fr. Francis Piskop, O.P., who received his commission as a missionary in Rome in April 1672 and left subsequently to that date, is mentioned by Shah Sulaiman as having brought to him Pope Clement's Brief: and, as Fr. Piskop reached Abranar (Nakhchiwan) 2.1.1674² and wrote from Abranar, 21.7.1674, it may be presumed that delivery of Pope Clement's letter took place in 1673, and the Shah's reply was issued possibly in 1673 also.

The inscription on the seal at the back reads:

(On the upper portion): Allah, Muhammad, and 'Ali.

(Underneath it): O Imam Husain.

(Inside the border circle): Sulaiman is the slave of the king of Religion 1078 (i.e. A.H.) which began 23.6.1667.

¹ The Shah refers to himself.

² S.R., vol. 450, p. 154; *Idem*, vol. 456, p. 116.

(Around the border): If the guide of thy grace should keep us company Heaven shall carry our royal terrain on its shoulder.
 (In the middle of the last inscription): O Imam Husain.

But, apart from oppressive taxation by local officials and the iniquitous law devised to force Christians to become Muslim, at the end of the 1660's the attitude of the schismatic Armenians towards the Uniats of their race must have become particularly virulent, for Brief after Brief of the Popes denounced it to Shah Sulaiman. It is an illuminative commentary on the progressive deterioration of the personal, direct rule of the Safawi monarchs that this persecution, not part of a Muslim or Court policy but altogether arbitrary from the side of the Gregorian Armenians, could exist without repression under Shah Sulaiman: it is difficult to envisage Shah 'Abbas I tolerating such conduct by one section of his subjects against another, however much he himself would mulct and oppress and be drastic against non-Muslim communities at times. These protests afford independent testimony too to the great change that had come over the attitude of schismatics towards Latins after 1645 or 1650: in Nakhchiwan, for instance, the two creeds had previously lived close neighbours for two or three centuries without notorious conflict.

Thus the Brief of 13.10.1668 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 68, p. 89) used the words:

"... Having very frequently experienced the particular clemency and other regal "virtues of Your Highness in having those professing Our religion kindly treated, We "confidently now recommend to You all Christians living in Armenia, so that with the "renowned nobility of mind, with which You were wont to treat Pontifical business, You "may be pleased to afford all their" (i.e. of the local Christians) "affairs and interests the "protection of Your patronage especially against attacks and molestation by the "schismatics. . . ."

That of 19.10.1669 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 68, p. 264) appealed for the Shah like his father to administer the district of Nakhchiwan direct and not farm it out to governors to exploit and be suborned by the money of the richer schismatics:

"... The father, of famous memory, of Your Highness granted to the Catholic "Armenians of the diocese of Nakhchiwan that they should enjoy a very wide measure of "freedom, even from government officials and governors whatsoever, and should be imme- "diately subject to the supreme jurisdiction of the sovereign. A privilege of this kind is "singularly necessary for maintaining their security and immunity from attacks by schis- "matics and other wicked men, We do not doubt but that Your Highness wishes to keep "it in force and inviolable for them, nay even We particularly beg that it be yet more estab- "lished by a fresh grant of Your clemency, and strengthened by it. . . ."

It was on account of Archbishop Matthew Hovannes of Nakhchiwan that on 25.10.1672 Pope Clement X once more took up the cudgels with his Brief (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 71, p. 52):

"Since there has come to Our ears the molestation which (Our) venerable brother, the "Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, has unjustly suffered at the hands of the chief of that province, "by whom he was put in chains and thrust into prison evidently because of the privileges "obtained from Your Highness for the Catholics, We have deemed it a duty of Our paternal "regard for him by this letter to ask You to be pleased to secure him for the future against "the attacks inflicted on him and on the dignity, with which he is invested, by the protection "of Your supreme authority, and to render Your very favours free from the insults of other "people."



SEAL OF SHAH SULAIMAN, DATED 1078 A.H. 1667 A.D. ON THE BACK
OF HIS LETTER OF 1673 TO POPE CLEMENT X



SEAL OF SHAH SULAIMAN, DATED 1091 A.H. 1680 A.D. ON THE BACK
OF HIS LETTERS OF 1684 5 TO POPE INNOCENT XI

Archbishop Matthew, O.P., of Nakhchiwan, who had gone there in May 1674, died while on a visit to the Court at Qazwin, and instructions were given for his corpse to be brought back to Abranar.¹

There was an interval of several years before the appointment of the next archbishop: but, when Mgr Picquet, as Vicar Apostolic of Baghdad and Isfahan, was about to leave Europe for Persia, 17.2.1678, in the General Session of the Sacr. Congregation²

“His Holiness ordered . . . that a letter should be written to Mgr Picquet, Bishop of “Caesaropolis, that on his way to his vicariate of Baghdad he should pass by Nakhchiwan “and endeavour that one of the missionary Fathers from Leghorn be elected archbishop.”

Mgr Picquet, who reached Abranar, 14.8.1681, reported to the Sacr. Congregation on 8.10.1681³ that the friars had finally agreed on Fr. Sebastian Knab, O.P.: his report continued:⁴

“ . . . The ill-treatment, extortion and tyranny of these Persian governors is continual “and perhaps harsher than that of the Turks, at least in respect to these poor Religious and “the Catholic population: on this account they bring much pressure on me to go and speak “to the king on their behalf. . . .”

Promptly after the news had reached Rome, on 26.10.1682 Pope Innocent XI wrote to Shah Sulaiman (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 75, p. 94) a Brief to be delivered by the new Archbishop, in which the words occur:

“ . . . Since by the witness of continual report there became known to Us how kindly “an attitude You adopt towards those who profess the Christian Faith in the very extensive “dominions of Your kingdom, We did not want to let pass the opportunity offered by the “departure of (Our) venerable brother Sebastian, Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, to the diocese “entrusted to him for sending this letter to Your Highness as a witness of Our grateful heart “and to notify You that all matters, whether good or bad, which happen to those professing “that religion are of particular concern to Us. Therefore We eagerly beg of Your sense of “equity that You will proceed to guard effectually those professing that religion from the “attacks and oppression of wicked men, and in all things liberally to assist them. First of “all We greatly recommend to Your Highness the aforesaid Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, “a man of singular uprightness and virtue, begging of You to be so good as to be of help “to him in the exercise of his office. . . .”

And Popes Innocent XI and Alexander VIII returned to urge the desideratum of the district being managed as a personal fief of the Shah, the former in his Brief of 12.4.1687 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 77, p. 152) stating:

“Since it has become known to Us that the Catholic Armenians, who are subject to the “pastoral care of the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, by a certain special grant of Your royal “benevolence are placed under the administration of You yourself, with no one coming “between, We could not omit to make splendidly public to You by this (letter) Our immense “joy over this matter, earnestly entreating of Your perspicuous greatness of heart, so very “celebrated throughout the whole world, that You will give orders for the aforesaid privilege “to be observed inviolate by Your officials, by enjoining on them that they should strive “to shield those same Catholics from molestation by the soldiers and from being harassed, “and to make them exempt from such. And because indeed the apostolic missionaries,

¹ Letter of Fr. Francis Piskop, O.P., Abranar, 21.7.1674, *S.R.*, vol. 456, p. 166.

² *Vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5, by late F. L. Lemmens.

³ *Idem*, quoting *Acta* of the Sacr. Cong. for 1682, p. 156.

R. vol. 485.

"who keep watch over the eternal salvation of the aforesaid Catholics, are not less dear to
 "Our heart, We commend them on that account in greater fashion to the supreme
 "protection of Your Highness . . ."

while the latter, on 27.5.1690 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 79, p. 180) wrote:

" . . . Since it concerns the Roman Pontiffs in the first place to aid with every help and
 "assiduity everywhere in the world the Christian faithful entrusted to their pastoral charge,
 "We, who, although undeserving, by the appointment of Divine providence have been
 "lately raised to the highest station of the Pontificate, in trying to fulfil the functions of the
 "office committed to Us cannot refrain from begging Your Highness pressingly to ratify
 "the privileges, which the distinguished king of the Persians, Your father, granted by royal
 "benevolence to the Christians living in Armenia, and to be pleased to save them from the
 "oppression with which at present those same people are assailed, even to the point of
 "cruelty, by bidding Your officials there to observe integrally the aforesaid privileges. . . ."

That, notwithstanding Shah Sulaiman's letter translated above, the persecution of Christians continued in this northern province of his empire, in particular the economic pressure put on them to become renegades in order to preserve their poor possessions, may be judged by a further appeal to Shah Sulaiman at the end of his reign when, in recommending to him the successor of Mgr Sebastian Knab in the archbishopric of Nakhchiwan, Fr. Paul Baptist Hovannes, Pope Innocent XII's Brief of 7.6.1692¹ was worded:

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. Cleaving
 "as We do to the solicitude with which Our predecessors, the Roman Pontiffs (in whose room
 "We have been elected not by any previous deserts of Our own, but only by God's provi-
 "dence so ordering it) have gained from Your Highness's lavish kindness that the Christians
 "in Greater Armenia should be immediately subject to Your royal control, We ourselves
 "earnestly beseech of that same kindness that You will permit these very same Christians,
 "who have been reduced to almost the utmost destitution to pay only that tribute which in
 "past times they were wont to pay according to their ability, the present collector of taxes
 "who is greatly detested by them being removed, and another more acceptable substituted.
 "But, as the soldiers of the Khan of Nakhchiwan inflict very harsh vexations on the said
 "Christians, We strongly desire You to bid them depart from the aforesaid province: and
 "with Our feelings no less roused We set Ourselves earnestly to gain from Your Highness's
 "broadmindedness that you will not allow those professing Christianity to be despoiled of
 "their property to the advantage of their kinsfolk of another (religious) persuasion. Lastly We
 "earnestly entrust to Your Highness's most exalted patronage Our venerable brother John"
 "[? sic for Paul] "Baptist to the end that he may be enabled in all respects to fulfil the office
 "of Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, which We have conferred on him owing to the virtues
 "wherewith he is amply endowed. You will also do Us a great favour by making a special
 "point of protecting from the plots and insults of godless men Father Stephen of the Order
 "of S. Dominic, who is going out there with him to enter on the duties of the post of pro-
 "vincial" (i.e. of the Dominicans) "as well as the members of that same Order. It remains
 "for You to welcome right kindly the aforementioned Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, who will
 "hand You a certain modest pledge of Our goodwill. Meanwhile We shall not cease to ask
 "continually of the Lord of Lords to grant Your Highness favourable successes and especially
 "to show You the way leading to life.

"Given at Rome . . . the 7th June 1692, in the first year of Our pontificate."

* * * * *

¹ Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, No. 80, p. 186.

From these lights on Shah Sulaiman's character and the persecution of non-Muslims during his reign it is time to turn to his foreign 'policy' (if so it may be termed) or that of his chief Wazirs, and to the position beyond the frontiers affecting the Carmelite and other missions. Firstly, as to the Turks, seeing that once more for Catholic Europe the Turkish question became fraught with anxiety, Muhammad IV was in the midst of his forty-year long, militant sultanate: most of Crete had been occupied by a Turkish force for years (since Canea had been seized in 1644), but the Venetians had defended Candia for 25 years when it at last fell, 'attacked by sea, by land and underground', in September 1669: and before that rueful day Pope Clement IX had written to Shah Sulaiman, 9.6.1668,¹ to announce the peace concluded between the sovereigns of Europe and the hope that the town of Candia in Crete and the whole island would now be delivered from the hands of the Turks in the following terms:

"Pope Clement to the illustrious and most puissant king of the Persians greeting and the
"light of Divine grace.

"We lately gave Our venerable Brother Matthew, Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, a letter
"for Your Highness. But it has indeed happened conveniently that before he departed
"tidings were brought to Us about the peace between the most puissant kings of Christen-
"dom which has been entirely completed and published. For, even as We trust that from
"it (with God's mercy vouchsafing it) not only the town of Candia will be liberated from
"the unjust assaults of the common foe, but also that by the influx from all quarters of strong
"relieving forces from the Christian princes the whole of that island will be snatched out
"of his grasp, so too We deserv therein an occasion ready to hand for Your renown (which
"We do indeed ardently favour). By turning Your arms against him that quality will
"reveal itself more and more notably, and to the praises of justice and distinguished bravery
"it will bring aid to Your best friends, and at the same time the losses inflicted on it by the
"very hostile foe will be avenged.

"Since of a certainty on the one hand at present the universal Christian commonwealth
"is at concord in a general peace (which for long past has never occurred elsewhere) and
"on the other even this very example set by the Venetians (who almost alone have been
"strong enough for so long to endure and repel all the forces and attempts of the Turks)
"sets before one's eyes that their strength, however huge that may seem, still at this juncture
"is undoubtedly not so to be feared. Yet should it happen, which God forbid, that this
"monstrous enemy get possession of the bulwark of Candia, it would be to be feared that
"he would then turn against You and Yours all that perpetual and insatiable hunger of his
"for devouring everything, increased as it would be by fresh successes and strength.

"Therefore whether for Our own sake or for Your Highness' also, We wished to write
"this second letter to You and (as We do with all Our heart) particularly to beg that You
"will in no wise suffer to slip out of Your hands so great an opportunity as this of curbing
"a most savage foe and of recovering from him what had been so unjustly seized by him,
"as also of spreading still more the invincible valour and celebrated renown of the Persians,
"according as the same Archbishop will in Your presence explain more extensively, in
"whose words You will kindly have full confidence just as if they had been Ours.

"For the rest We greatly desire that with a very kindly and willing spirit You will accept
"and recognize in a small gift a huge proof of Our especial affection and esteem for such a
"great king. . . . Given at S. Mary Major, Rome, under the Fisherman's ring, the 9th
"day of June 1668, in the first year of Our pontificate."

The whereabouts at Rome of Shah Sulaiman's answer (if it was preserved) are not indicated: that it was dispatched is evident from an allusion in a letter of the Prior of the Carmelites at Isfahan, 5.7.1670:²

"Fr. Antonio, companion of Monsignor Matthew, Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, is leaving

¹ Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, No. 67, p. 718.

² Fr. Angelus of S. Joseph, O.C.D. 236

"at once for Rome and France with the replies of the king of Persia to His Holiness, for "the king of France, etc., to the letters brought to the king of Persia by Monsignor . . ."¹

Sultan Muhammad IV himself led the next campaign of the Turks—against Poland, when they took Lemberg: the Poles sought peace and relinquished the Ukraine to Turkey: the treaty of Zuravno in 1676 consolidated the new possessions of Turkey in Europe. The peace was broken by that prodigious drive of the Turks to make themselves masters of Vienna, which they began to attack, 13.7.1683: and Central Europe—who knows how far north?—was saved by the leadership and military genius of the great king John Sobieski of Poland and by the armed contingents of Christendom rallied under him, who routed the Turks under the walls of the city and made them flee south, 12.9.1683: only despicable pride and jealousy on the part of the Emperor Leopold (to a less extent the anti-Imperial *parti-pris* and short-sighted policy, which made Louis XIV refrain from participating in the allied Christian cause) stopped the gallant Sobieski from continuing the pursuit to Constantinople itself, as he would have wished, and from driving the Turks once for all out of Europe.

Others have borne witness to the efforts with which Pope Innocent XI, worthy Crusading successor to Pope Pius V, seconded the Christian campaign—his "Fourteenth Crusade against the enemy of Christianity." Here it is a duty to point to the fact that Pope and monarchs in Europe were alive to the utility of providing, if possible, a military diversion in Turkey by reviving the century-old warfare between Persia and Turkey—rather late in the day, perhaps, because it was of 26.6.1684 when in the Carmelite papers preserved there may be read:²

"The king of Persia is about to give audience to four of our ambassadors—from the "Emperor in the person of a Dominican bishop, from the king of Poland, from Sweden and "from Moscow. . . . The Christian princes beg the king of Persia to make war on the Turk, "but there is no appearance of his doing so, because he is given over to the flesh and not "to the sword: he allows a chief minister of his, who is hostile to Christians, to do every-"thing. . . ."

From Basra the Visitor General of the Carmelites confirmed this, 2.7.1684:³

" . . . here" (i.e. in Persia) "not the slightest preparation is being made for the war. On "the contrary, as I understand, the Persian (monarch) is not moving in the least: and, more "than that, it is said that, when the ambassador from Poland had arrived to invite him "(the Shah) to take up arms, he (Shah Sulaiman) threatened to take his life, if he (the "(ambassador) did not quit his (the Shah's) dominions immediately, saying: 'How! the "infidels dare to call on me to take up arms against Muslims.' . . ."

However, a further letter of this Visitor General, after he had been to Isfahan that summer to make the visitation, and was back again at Shiraz, 26.10.1684, was to the effect that:⁴

"I had the letter from the Emperor to the Shah presented through the secretary, a friend "of Fr. Athanasius, and after a long time, when they learnt of the Emperor's [*? sic*] victory "over the Turks, they" (the Persian Wazirs) "decided to reply and concede some "privileges. . . ."

¹ Not only with the Shah of Persia did the Popes of this period strive all they could for the preservation, and then the recovery of the island of Crete for Christendom. On 12.6.1668 the Pope addressed Louis XIV urging peace in Europe and the necessity of doing something about Candia. He wrote to the king of Spain, 1.5.1668, about the whole of Crete. On 23.3.1669 the Pope sent a Brief to the Doge and Republic of Venice on the need for recovering Crete and Candia. After his accession in 1676 Innocent XI wrote to Louis XIV of his desire to do something with Christian princes: "aliquando "conquiescant et gravissimo imminenti ab Infidelibus et Barbaris periculo. . . ."

To Queen Catharine of Great Britain, too, Pope Clement had written, 19.2.1669:

"Ingens ac sollicita cura mentem Nostram anxiam indesinenter habet ne Candiae civitas quae magnopere perichitatur "in manus hostis infensi cadat. . . . Hinc ab eximia pietate Maestatis Tuae etiam atque etiam petimus ut si quid opis "ab ea in hanc tam piam causam istic parari poterit id omni reipublicae Venetae conferre benigne velit. . . ."

² Fr. Fortunatus of Jesus Mary, O.C.D. 237 k.

³ Fr. Angelus, O.C.D. 241 a.

⁴ *Idem*, O.C.D. 238 k.

Of the 'privileges' in question the Carmelite archives in Rome¹ possess one copy in the original Persian, of which the following is a translation:

"It has been ordered by the lord of the world that the exalted viceroys (Baiglarbaigis) "and each one of the governors and ministers and factors should know that We have given "leave to the white-mantled² Carmelite Fathers to stay wherever they may please, and settle "down and pursue in their own fashion their practices of piety. When they" (the officials addressed) "have become aware of the purport of Our exalted rescript, they (the Carmelites) are not to be stopped, prevented or troubled in any way whatsoever, and they" (the officials) "are to allow them (the Carmelites) to stay and settle anywhere they wish, so "that the present body may, in the same way as their predecessors, occupy themselves in "pious exercises and prayers for the preservation of the government, and see to it and take "care that they acquit themselves of it. Written in the month of Ramazan the blessed" (i.e. approximately between 12th August and 10th September, 1684).

(It was on the authority of this *ragam* that Prior Elias reopened the house at Julfa, which the Sharimans had given for the occupation of himself and the priest Barsegh, and went back to live and work in Julfa—*vide* the 'Vita P. F. Elia a S. Alberto' by Lay Brother Francis Mary of S. Sirus, O.C.D. 320 c: the value attached to the wording of the document by the Diwan Baigi, the civil judge, himself, when Fr. Elias in 1694 produced it as royal authority for the Carmelites to build a new church in Julfa, and the original was pocketed by the Diwan Baigi, will be read in due course.)

In the following year, 21.3.1685,³ Fr. Elias, Prior of the Carmelites, gave as his opinion of the result of the pressure from Europe:

"... As to the king of Persia, besides the Resident another fresh envoy has come with "four other letters from the king of Poland (as well as the archbishop of Nakhchiwan), also "a delegate from the king of Sweden, begging the king of Persia to make war on the Turks. "But the Persians hesitate, (busy) with their own politics, and there is no appearance of their "deciding on war, to which they are unaccustomed now for so many years past . . ."

while another Carmelite wrote in May 1685:⁴

"Many ambassadors are coming here from the Christian princes to stir up the king to "make war against the Turks, but in vain; for he rather shows displeasure at the defeats of "the latter, besides which his object and world is nothing else than wine and women. News "has reached here that the Imperial forces have taken the city of Buda(pest); but the Turks "deny it, saying that they have defeated the Emperor's army under the walls of the "town. . . ."

However far it may be true that thirty to forty years of pacific sloth and effeminacy in high places had rusted and ruined the military machine, which had been so competent in the hands of Shah 'Abbas I and even in the reign of his grandson, and so made the Wazirs and governors unready for war (even in self-defence, as was to be shown amply thirty years later during the Afghan invasion), none the less there is little doubt that, once the Shahs ceased to govern in person, side by side with that loss of military worth there had grown up under the aegis of a succession of bigoted Wazirs a dislike for Christians (the effects of which were to be felt till the twentieth century) and an avoidance of close relations with European states, carried even to the extent of goodwill towards the hereditary enemy of the Safawi dynasty—the Turk—because a co-religionist. For who could question what the attitude of 'Abbas the First would have

¹ O.C.D. 320 c. ² 'White-mantled' — *safid-push*, alluding no doubt to the white mantle worn by the Carmelites.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 495.

⁴ Fr Amadeus, 31.5.1685, O.C.D. 238 i

been to that military attack on a grand scale by the Christian princes, for which he had called in vain during three decades, his answer to these envoys from Europe and the chance offered of regaining Baghdad, all Mesopotamia, perhaps Erzerum to the Black Sea?

The epic tale of king Jan Sobieski's valour and leading even so must have stirred chords of fighting sympathy not already dead in the supine, dissolute Sulaiman:

"In 1686 the king had read to him many times" (the narrative of) "the relief of Vienna, "translated into Persian by Fr. — a Capuchin, his interpreter. . . ."¹

The same Mgr Sebastian Knab, O.P.,² appointed, as already noted above, Archbishop of Nakhchiwan (28.9.1682), had been commissioned by Pope Innocent XI (Odescalchi) to deliver to Shah Sulaiman a Brief³ dated 29.6.1683 (i.e. before Vienna had been relieved) and thus worded:

"Illustrious and most puissant king. How pestilential to all nations the Turks always "have been and will be is abundantly made manifest by their empire extended as it is by "them far and wide through the violation of the law both of men and of God, and by their "insatiable lust for rule. Hence it calls for the foreseeing dexterity and watchfulness of "other kings and princes to be mutually ready and sharply to fall to against the common "and implacable foe, when the occasion demand, lest grown in strength through daily new "accessions he should get at last each one of them into his power. But, since We deem it "known by the evidence of consistent report, and obviously manifest that Your Highness "is endowed with those qualities of lofty and invincible spirit, by which it is necessary that "a most mighty king should be distinguishable, We are justified in trusting that, when You "shall have learnt that these same Turks, having gathered together immense forces from "all quarters, have attacked the kingdom of Hungary, You will send Your strongest armies "into their dominions, in order to take vengeance for the losses which they have so many "times inflicted and are ready to inflict on Your most noble country. Out! then, most "puissant king, with the sword that avenges wrongs done to the State! Embrace the fortune "which invites You to the palm" (of victory) "and rest convinced that We shall not be remiss "in asking constantly of the Divine goodness as payment for the rewards, which We hope "will from Your strenuous efforts be diverted to help the Christian commonwealth com- "mitted to Our pastoral care, that He may bestow on Your Highness wished-for successes, "but that in the first place He show You the perfect light of His truth, by which You may "be able to enjoy both eternal as well as temporal blessings.

"Given at S. Peter's, Rome, the 29th day of June, 1683."

The reply to that Brief is fortunately among the few preserved in the original Persian:⁴ a photographic reproduction is given in this book. It is undated, and unsigned (as customary), but bears on the reverse a seal of Shah Sulaiman, having the date 1091 A.H. (i.e. the year beginning 2nd February 1680, which represents, however, when this seal was brought into use, not the date of the letter), and inscriptions:

(In the upper portion): "In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate."

(Inside the circle): "Sulaiman, the slave of the king, Succour, 1091" (i.e. Imam 'Ali).

(And around the circular border): "O Lord! bless Muhammad the chosen and Fatimeh the "serene, 'Ali the approved, Hasan, Husain, 'Ali, Muhammad-ul-Baqir, Ja'far the Truth- "teller, Musa-ul-Kazim: 'Ali-ur-Riza: Muhammad-ut-Taqi: 'Ali-un-Naqi: Hasan-ul- " "Askari and the proof Mahdi, lord of the times" (i.e. the names of the prophet, his daughter Fatimeh, followed by those of the twelve Imams).

¹ *Hist. delle guerre dell'Europa*, vol. I-XIII, p. 431, Bergami.

² A note in *S.R.* seems to imply that he was an Englishman.

³ Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, 75, p. 167. ⁴ Arch. Secr. Vat. A.A. Arm., I-XVIII, 1737

و بعد از این که در میان ایشان اتفاق افتاد و هر یک را به جای خود فرستادند و در میان ایشان اتفاق افتاد و هر یک را به جای خود فرستادند

سینہ ترم بر باد است و بدلت جا پس بر نرسد **ف**خامت ملا و احسن الخاقین **ب**مجاذ احسن السالطین **و** در سخا که ابواب عسرت و افساد بر نرسد و محب یونان و است

کتابت حضرت نثاریت اور سید علی میرزا ابو محمد بن علی الشاہ بابائے میر کتب شریف عیسائیہ درود و دھوکہ کی کہ دیکھا پھر دیابھ الہ اساطیر میں ہم مہم جو کہ ہندو بد مذہب و بد چارہ کٹر کلمہ پاشا ہاں فرنگی

[illegible]

رضای بہتادجالف فرمود حضرت دودغند تو و من و عوف ہوتہ ذوات آج ہر صاحب کار و ہر مالک مالک اتحاد ہر دعا علی کتب و ہر مالک کہ ہر مالک مالک ہر مالک

که از کمر جوی و بلال و موقف تخت و اقبال و نقوشا و طباخ و اسرافان و صفا و اسب و اسب

In the body of the letter it is noteworthy that the words used in the honorifics given to the Pope—*Isāwīh* and *Masīhīh*, i.e. "Christian" from the names of Jesus and Messiah respectively, are written in gold ink, standing out against the rest in black—doubtless meant as a compliment. The preamble, apostrophizing the Pope with several lines of grandiloquent epithets (even Plato and Aristotle being used as prototypes)—abstract terms in Arabic and not concrete—strung together in a rhyming jingle, it would be beyond the skill of the greatest orientalist to render exactly, word for word, into a European tongue and yet make sense. A close translation of the kernel of the letter¹ is, however, as follows:

"Pope Innocent the Eleventh,

"At a time when the doors of delight and pleasure were open to our royal face and when the means of (achieving) glory and greatness were provided by the generosity of the Unquestionable Arbiter, Your noble epistle inspiring friendship and stimulating alliance acquired the honour of being received through Sebastian Knab.

"As to what You had written on the subject of the struggle with the Sultan of Turkey, as has been repeatedly intimated (by Us) to the kings of Europe and Russia, a long time ago this dynasty, following the precepts of justice, concluded peace with the monarchs of those realms" (i.e. the Turkish) "and no irregular action has come to light from that quarter.

"At this juncture, to commit an action derogatory to (Our) dignity will be opposed to the pleasure of the Unequalled (God) and contrary to the command of his holiness (i.e. the prophet) and it is therefore delayed and postponed to its proper time.

"You, crowned monarch, should ever tread the path of amity, and intimate the true conditions of affairs and such desires as you may have, so that late-like commands may be issued from the seat of honour and glory² for carrying them out and complying with them.

"May the days of Your reign, glory, greatness, grandeur and majesty endure. . . ."

In the absence of any note attached to show the time of receipt of that letter in Rome or of its dispatch from Persia, its date can be only approximately conjectured by the reference in it to Archbishop Sebastian Knab, O.P., who had delivered Pope Innocent's letter and reached his residence, Abranar, 17.6.1684:³ whether delivery to Shah Sulaiman took place before or after that date is uncertain—perhaps afterwards, in view of the statement by Fr. Fortunatus, 26.6.1684, already quoted, that: "the king of Persia is about to give audience to four of our ambassadors—from the emperor, by a Dominican bishop": Shah Sulaiman's reply translated above may, therefore, be ascribed to the latter half of 1684, or 1685.

For the time being the crisis of 1683 had passed in Europe, so that the unwillingness of Shah Sulaiman and of his Wazirs to antagonize Turkey did not matter; but before 1689, by when the Ottomans had lost nearly all their possessions beyond the Danube, they had made a fresh effort, which was only stayed by their defeat in the great battle of Mohacz on the plains of Hungary in 1687,⁴ and the vigilant and tireless Pope Innocent XI was again hammering away at the Persian Court. His Brief of 20.7.1686⁵ thus addressed Shah Sulaiman:

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace.

"Although We are easily persuaded that the abjectness of the condition, in which for the present, with the God of battles fighting against them, the Turks are placed, both from the notable defeats received and the prosperous towns they have lost, provides Your Highness with sufficient incentive to recover from them the very wide dominions of which, through the height of injustice the distinguished kings Your ancestors were despoiled, nevertheless the bidding of Divine providence, proved by so many and such remarkable

¹ For assistance in which, and for decyphering the inscriptions on the seals, thanks are due to Saiyid Muhammad Ahmad (Khan Bahadur Mirza Muhammad, C.I.E.), L.L.B., of Basra.

² So Shah Sulaiman alludes to himself.

³ *Vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5; also S.R., vol. 490, p. 252 *et seq.*, letter of Fr. Elias.

⁴ After which Sultan Muhammad IV was deposed.

⁵ Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, No. 77, p. 43.

"lessons and warnings in regard to a race hateful to Him and meet to be completely destroyed, as it is right to hope, compels Us to apply to You again and again spurs powerful enough to effect that very purpose. For neither do We doubt but that from this consideration the more impetuously You will be moved to turn Your invincible arms to the overthrow of this same race, and indeed there ought particularly to urge You to it the soil of Baghdad still soaking with the innocent blood of Persians and expecting from You a just vengeance at such a favourable time on a most savage enemy.

"Conceive, therefore, O most puissant king, sentiments worthy of Your greatness and, kindling with the energetic heat of gaining imperishable glory, hasten with eager march to the notable victories to be won over these most spiteful barbarians.

"We on Our part shall not omit to strew the broad way for Your triumphs with Our constant and earnest prayers, while We besides ask the Supreme Father of lights graciously to pour into the mind of Your Highness the rays of His light, whereby You may be able to attain perfect truth. Given at S. Mary Major, Rome, under the Fisherman's ring, the 20th day of July 1686."¹

No reply to this second exhortation has been traced at the Vatican. Curiously enough, however—and its exact implication and the reason for its issue are not apparent (unless to provide a title for the Jesuits to construct a house and chapel for the mission they made there), for primarily the matter seems of no importance in such stirring times—there is on record another Brief dated 26.8.1684,² by Pope Innocent XI to Shah Sulaiman, and it concerned accommodation at Shamakha, which lies inland from Baku:

" . . . Since it has become known to Us that the envoys of Christian princes, sent by those same princes to Your Highness, on the road by which they make for Your Court in all cases touch at Shamakha which is reckoned among the chief towns of Your famous country and lying on that same route, We are easily induced to solicit of the courtesy by which You are particularly distinguished above the other eminent qualities of Your royal mind, that You will permit a dwelling to be got ready there for the reception of Christians who proceed to Your vast dominions. . . ."

The answer to that letter is also preserved—in Arch. Secr. Vat., A.A. Arm. I-XVIII, 1737 a, and a photograph of the Persian original included in the illustrations to this book. It bears the same seal, dated the Muslim year equivalent to 1680-1, as that of Shah Sulaiman in reply to the Pope's Brief (dated 19.6.1683) and perhaps was issued at the same time: the honorifics are different. As literal a rendering as possible of the matter of this reply would be as follows:

"To Innocent XI, Pope of Rome.

"To him whom the ruling Christian princes serve, liege-lord of the glorious potentates of the religion of the Messiah, Pope Innocent the Eleventh. After evincing the requisites of affection and alliance, and expressing the measures of friendship and amity it is submitted to the moon-like opinion and explained to the sun-like conscience" (i.e. of His Holiness) "that the friendly letter of that glorious and illustrious sovereign acquired honour and was received in the heaven-like royal assemblage, in company of the eloquent and sweet-tongued envoy, Sulaiman the ambassador. You had given instructions that We should permit Your dependents to construct buildings in the district of Shirwan for the

¹ So that the reader may have in his mind the final stage of this chapter in the relations between Europe and Turkey—although it lies slightly outside the reign of Shah Sulaiman—it may be added succinctly that the Turkish generalissimo, Kuprîluzadeh Mustafa, drove the Austrians out of Serbia and recaptured Belgrade, 1691, but in August of that year was defeated and killed when advancing from Belgrade to attack Austria. and Sultan Mustafa II, who succeeded in 1695, totally defeated the Austrian army and raised the siege of Temesvár, while on the Grecian front the Venetian Morosini was successful in driving the Turks out of the Morea. With Prince Eugene of Savoy in command of the allies on 26.1.1697 the treaty of Carlowitz was signed between Turkey, and Austria, Venice, Russia and Poland, each party retaining territory of which it was then in occupation.

² Arch. Secr. Vat. *Ephst. ad Princ.*, No. 76, p. 110.

اكتساب و فضایل آداب فایده بخش معارف و کتب تحفه فیش خرم و نورش ندیم که در وقت شربایا کما فی بین مقدمه در دشتان مرغ دولت از حضرت انصاری

برنج فنیست و افسال فروزند پس از هر فرازند را سیت پرور پیستند و باقی حق صاحب کنین و تسبیح ملاطین باغ و گلستان را بعد از آنجا

الوارث من محبت و الفت والجار مرااتب سادات و ملت مرفوع راى متسرنياسي همسرا احوالا كاشوف ضمير خوشد نظرمودت اتما ميكر دانه كر كتاب

دوستی کتاب آن اہت و جلالت قباب مصحوب عینہ نکر تھا۔ نچتہ مقال سلیمین الجی بادشاہ والاچاہہ لغہ عربیہ و رومانیہ و بائیں شین

شبابی و اصل کردید ایمانو و بودند گپن آنجا لیکن امر غرض میامیم که در اگلا بیشتر این منازل را بهر یک میسرودین دیار آن جناب و صاحب وقت

عجارت مناسب مامول آن نمینید و پسیر غرت و تکین بشف حصول مین بر دتم قصاص مضایق در افتد اردان بابشرف اصدار یافت

در استحقاق بیان و تفسیر کتب کثیده مطالب معاصده که درین صوب صواب داشته باشند اعلام نمایند که توجیه یوانه

نصرتمثال برضای از دوستال بری از و بال باد

“habitation of passers-by from Your royal realms. The desire of that worthy occupant of
“a sovereign throne has received the honour of compliance and a fate-like rescript has had
“the distinction of being issued on the subject. You should ever strive to strengthen the
“foundation of friendship and concord and intimate such objects and wishes You may have
“in these parts so that the royal attention may be paid towards their attainment.

“May the star of good fortune be immune from setting by the grace of the benevolent
“Almighty.”

In addition to the relations and correspondence between the Holy See and Shah Sulaiman, and apart from the other envoys mentioned as delegated to him, there is note made in the letters perused of an

“ambassador from Poland, a Georgian, with whom Fr. Jerome of Jesus Mary went to Europe
“in April 1670.”¹

This personage, a later letter² stated,

“had Monsieur Ender, a Polish gentleman of his staff, murdered at Shamakha, a town on
“the Persian frontier (where Fr. Jerome was going): and the ambassador himself, who was
“guilty of many wrongdoings against both religion and state, having irritated the Poles
“against him to an extreme degree, received sixteen sword-cuts, from which however he
“recovered. . . .”

In the waters of the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean comparatively little is the object of comment by the missionary Fathers during the reign of Shah Sulaiman regarding the activities and rivalries of the European nations. As to the French, in May 1668:³

“Two French vessels have appeared in Indian waters, and at Cochin had been welcomed
“by the Dutch” (!!) “. . . Fr. Athanasius has been sent to Gāmbun to look after the
“gentlemen of the French company. . . .”

In July the same Religious remarked:

“Monsieur de Caron has arrived at Surat with two vessels of the French Company . . .”
and reported, 2.9.1670:

“We French are already established in the Indies, but not yet well in Persia. Four of
“their vessels this year, however, came to Basra, as well as four English ships and three
“Dutch. . . .”

An entry of 31.5.1672⁴ speaks of:

“Monsieur Nicolas Mariage” (several times mentioned as at Bandar ‘Abbas in 1669 and later) “president of the Royal Trading company for the Indies at Surat, (is) going to
“France for private affairs, intending to return to his post at Surat . . .”

while on the 1st January of that year a Capuchin of Georgia,⁵ who happened to be in Surat on an errand, found there ten French ships, and stated:

“the French have already established a Factory in the Persian Gulf. . . .”

¹ Fr. Angelus of S. Joseph, 2.9.1670, O.C.D. 236 i.

² *Idem*, 27.4.1671.

³ *Idem*, O.C.D. 237 d, and 30.7.1668, O.C.D. 241 d.

⁴ Fr. Toussaint, Basra, O.C.D. 242 a.

⁵ Fr. Joseph Antony of Rome, *S.R.*, vol. 441, p. 150.

But Fr. Jerome of Jesus Mary, the Pole, writing from Basra, 30.8.1673,¹ made it clear that:

"... war continues between the same nations as in Europe, yet with unequal forces; for 'here the Flemings (i.e. Dutch) are very strong and in large numbers: and they say they 'have captured seven French ships. . . ."

The Portuguese continued to show their flag in the Gulf, and made a number of naval demonstrations against the Arabs, but failed to get to grips, or re-establish themselves at Masqat:

"30.7.1668. . . . The Portuguese Armada has left Kung to go and set fire to the port 'of Masqat. . . ."²

"2.9.1670. . . . The Portuguese Armada, composed of 25 men-o'-war, has arrived off 'Masqat: and 7 vessels are at Kung, to recover their (Customs) dues from the king of 'Persia. . . ."³

"20.3.1671. . . . Fresh news received that the Armada has reached the Gulf: 14 galleons 'of which Don Antonio de Mello is the general. . . ."

"12.11.1672. . . . The news here is that the Portuguese fleet, which is this year at Kung, 'i.e. in the Persian Gulf, is about to make war on Persia, in order to compel payment of 'the duties due to the king" (of Portugal) "from that port, not paid for several years past 'because of their lack of power and the decline of their nation. . . ."

"30.8.1673.⁴ . . . The Portuguese fleet and its commander remain here in the Persian 'Gulf for the present: he had declared war on the Arabs of Masqat, but no warlike opera- 'tions have ensued so far, for neither do the Arabs put out to sea, nor do the Portuguese 'approach the fortress to attack it—a very difficult business with their small numbers and 'its situation, so well fortified by nature and artifice. . . ."

Then in regard to the difficulties between the Portuguese and the recently established Turkish government at Basra in August 1682 the Vicar of Basra noted:⁵

"... We are expecting today or tomorrow a French vessel. We have two Turkish 'in port, which came from India under the English flag, and thus escaped the Portuguese 'who detained eleven other Turkish vessels at Kung. The Pasha, or governor, of this 'place asked me to send one of my companions to Kung to arrange the dispute between 'him and the Portuguese. . . ."—

an early example of the use of the neutral flag at sea.

It was in Basra, however, that the Carmelites were definitely affected during the period under review by local struggles, in no sense directed against themselves. This part of Mesopotamia had remained under nominal Turkish suzerainty: and in the year 1665 the local Arab 'Pasha' or governor, who had an understanding with the Persians, rose against Turkish overlordship, aiming at independence. The Turkish Pasha in Baghdad with a force descended the rivers to attack him. From that time till 1669 Basra and its inhabitants, including the Carmelites, went through a series of sieges, plunderings, changes of masters, massacres, vivid accounts of which by the several Religious concerned are not repeated here, but may be read in detail in the section of this work dealing with the Residence at Basra—and, as recorded by eye-witnesses, they probably contribute a chapter to the history of Basra more or less unknown to the present generation of Basrawis. That Residence was almost entirely destroyed in the prolonged fighting: so much so that, with the impression caused in Rome by the recital of its misfortunes, the Pope himself granted 700 scudi in aid of reconstruction:⁶ in 1672 a receipt of 100 scudi from the Sacr. Congregation on this account is mentioned.⁷ From 1669

¹ O.C.D. 241 l.

² Fr. Angelus, O.C.D. 241 d.

³ O.C.D. 236 i, *idem*.

⁴ Fr. Jerome of Jesus Mary, O.C.D. 241 l, Basra.

⁵ Fr. Agathangelus, Basra, O.C.D. 241 c, 8.8.1682.

⁶ *S.R.*, vol. 428, p. 562.

⁷ O.C.D. 241 l. Fr. Jerome of Jesus Mary, 7.6.1672.

began the effective administration of Basra and its province by the Turks, which lasted till the European War of 1914 save for two brief intervals of Persian occupation.

A description of the refreshments offered them on the occasion of a visit to the Turkish Pasha by two Religious in 1675 deserves notice here, because it shows how little the entertainment varied by 1910, say, in Arab centres round the Persian Gulf:¹

“We were given coffee, which is the Turkish drink, then a certain other drink called ‘Sharbat’ ” (lime- or orange-juice, probably): “next rose-water to put in our beards: ‘finally incense in a fine vessel of silver-gilt, also to scent and ‘fumigate’ our beards. Each time we had put on our knees different pieces of gold brocade.”

In a Muslim land, with procedure often ruthless, this mission post continued to do great service to all Christians of whatever nation, heterodox or Catholic, as will be appreciated on a perusal of the separate chapter on the Residence at Basra, and from this single quotation from the *Chronicle* of Basra:²

“In the same month of August 1676 we freed from prison and the risk of apostasy three ‘Englishmen, who had seriously wounded a Muhammadan, when defending themselves ‘in a row. Daily Christians have recourse to us in their needs great and small, and we ‘always try to aid and comfort them. . . .”

On the practice of the customs-houses in the region during this period Carmelites have left two observations of interest, showing how definite customs-houses and duties had become in the East: in 1668 from Persia³ it was pointed out that

“any little curiosity brought from Europe, if it goes to Basra risks having to pay Customs ‘four times over—twice each at Bandar Rig and at Basra, on entering and on leaving—‘whereas at Kung” (under Portuguese control) “there are no such risks . . .”,

while in 1678, at Baghdad,⁴

“when we arrived . . . we passed the Customs free to the house of the Capuchin Fathers, ‘whence we went to take the boxes in the Customs, paying about 2 piastres. . . . I find ‘the impossibility (of which people talk) of passing things through the Customs much less ‘than in Europe where they are a hundred times more strict and harsh than the Turks ‘are. The dealings of the latter are not so dreadful as they are depicted and, apart from ‘matters of religion, they are perhaps more polite than we are. It is only necessary to ‘use a little care and pains over consigning goods to some friendly merchant, even if he is ‘a Turk, for the latter to perform the service with an incredible punctiliousness. . . .”

Here, too, is record in 1672⁵ of the Yazidis by a Carmelite traveller—that strange, small religious denomination:

“Five days before, near a place called Nisibin” (Mausil) “we met the ‘king’ or ‘prince’ ‘of the Yazidis or Kurds; who from the desert was going to pass the summer in the coolness ‘of the mountains, with an innumerable number of people, all very poor and miserable, ‘who were driving numberless sheep and cows, on which they support themselves for a ‘living. In front of this ‘prince’—if so he can be called—was borne a standard, red

¹ Fr. Agathangelus, 1.10.1675, O.C.D. 241 c.

² See *The Settlement of Carmelites at Basra*, published by late Sir H. Gollancz.

³ O.C.D. 237 d, Fr. Dionysius, 31.5.1668.

⁴ Fr. Peter Paul of S. Francis, O.C.D. 241 o, 27.1.1679.

⁵ O.C.D. 242 a, Fr. John Mary of Jesus, 27.7.1672.

"bordered with yellow, with Muhammadan emblems, because on it was depicted a half-moon and seven medallions, and on the other side a sword split up like a compass.¹
 "Some seven persons followed on horseback, armed with arrows and cleavers: last there came the king garbed in a fur coat lined outside with green cloth, and a white *Turkish*² turban, also mounted on a horse, which was rather poor. . . . We saw all this as close as half a stone's throw. . . ."

* * * * *

The episcopal position in this reign, as it affected Persia, saw a number of changes. On 10.4.1669 Bishop Bernard of S. Teresa, for 27 years then an absentee from his diocese of Baghdad, died in Paris in the Seminary for Foreign Missions, of which he was so munificent and important a co-founder:³ for in October 1663 by deed he contracted to hand over to the procurators for the Seminary for Foreign Missions all those buildings which he had constructed in the previous years and his real estate, library, chapel and garden in the rue de Babylonne on the stipulation that he was to be allowed to reside in one of the houses, and to receive annually to the end of his life a pension of 3,000 livres.⁴ (On the previous 5th of April the Nuncio in Paris—the Archbishop of Thebes—had written to Rome of

"the very critical condition, with little or no hope of recovery of the Bishop of Babylon, whose coadjutor, Mgr de Neocaesarea, unwilling to obey the Sac. Congregation de Prop. Fide, which had already ordered him to proceed to his residence in Isfahan, was recently "by instructions of their Eminences forbidden by me to make use of pontificals. . . .")

For one reason, Mgr Placid du Chemin stood out for being paid an allowance for the previous six years, and for the house and 'cathedral' purchased and adapted at Isfahan by Bishop Bernard being restored to him, or others provided. During 1669, after the death of Bishop Bernard, Mgr du Chemin, who had succeeded by right of coadjutorship as bishop of Babylon, went to Rome, and the Cardinals of Propaganda decided to grant him travelling expenses

"so that he may continue his journey direct to his place of residence in Isfahan,"

and to assign a further sum for payment of Mgr du Chemin's debts contracted in France on receipt of news of his arrival at Isfahan. A second time—and now to Shah Sulaiman, 28.9.1669—a Brief was issued recommending Mgr du Chemin, "who is being sent for the spiritual 'welfare of the Catholics of Baghdad'".⁵ But the Bishop of Baghdad was:

"far from satisfied with these decisions and has presented a Memorial, in which he sets out . . . that it is not convenient . . . for him to proceed direct hence (Rome) to Persia . . . because he was unable to set in order his affairs in Paris before leaving. Therefore "it is necessary for him to return there. . . . He adds that, with the present wars between "the French and the Turks, were he to go to Turkey he might be captured . . . out of "suspicion that he was going in the name of the king of France and His Holiness to persuade "the king of Persia to make war on the Turks. . . ."⁶

¹ Could this have been a *Yazidi* standard?

² Emphasizing the difference—Persians wore red turbans.

³ A copy of the *Lettres du Roy pour l'établissement d'un Séminaire pour les Missions Étrangères*, beginning: "La Providence qui ne manque jamais, en cette occasion. . . . Notre très cher fils Bernard de S. Therese, evesque de Babilonne . . ." is to be found in *S.R.*, vol. 421, pp. 92-3.

⁴ The income belonging to the diocese had been attached because of the Bishop having alienated certain properties that were thought to belong to the Sac. Cong. (see *S.R.*, vol. 420, p. 168).

⁵ *Vide* Arch. Secr. Vat., No. 68, p. 243, Clem. IX, ann. 2.

⁶ *S.R.*, vol. 420, p. 158.

Next, this eccentric nominee by the Archbishop of Toulouse for such a see as Baghdad 'postulated'—made a request for—the title of 'patriarch' together with the imposition of the sacred pallium, in letters in elegant Latin with many quotations, engrossed in shapely handwriting.¹ He also argued at enormous length that Isfahan was part of the diocese of Baghdad! (He had seized on faulty drafting of the Bulls to make this last claim.) These assertions were carefully examined:²

"In the Sacr. Consistorial Congregation, on 3.7.1670, there were brought up three 'applications, which had been referred to it by the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide on behalf of Mgr Louis Placid du Chemin, Bishop of Baghdad, who had been directed 'to proceed to his place of residence:

"(a) the first was that, as the church at Babylon was a patriarchate, he (Mgr du Chemin) 'should be granted the pallium, and style of 'Patriarch'.

"(b) that, as he was by the Bulls no less bishop of Isfahan than of Babylon, there should 'be no innovation made as regards his jurisdiction as Ordinary, belonging to 'him in each of the dioceses.

"(c) that the limits of those dioceses be set out so that he may know how far his jurisdiction extends and within what limits he can use the facilities granted him.

"To the first application the Sacr. Consistorial Congregation replied: 'Nothing at all,' 'judging that the application was void for many reasons, especially for two, viz.:

"(I) the authority of the Canons in Arabic attributed to the Council of Nicæa being 'limited, the church of Seleucia, to which it is claimed that Babylon or Baghdad 'has succeeded, was never recognized as a patriarchal church, neither by the 'Roman church nor by any legitimate Council, nor by approved writers: and, 'even if Seleucia had been assigned the title of 'patriarchate', it is not proved 'that Babylon succeeded to Seleucia, since from the geographical maps the 'contrary appears to have occurred, for they uniformly show Seleucia on the 'banks of the Tigris and Babylon on those of the Euphrates, though not far 'distant the one from the other.

"(II) the application was rejected because, whatever the truth may be in this controversy, in our present case attention must be had to the intention of the Sovereign 'Pontiff, who had no desire for the prelate at Babylon to be a 'Patriarch', nor 'would it be expedient for reasons which were discreetly noticed in the Congregation, but he (the Pope) had explicitly appointed him bishop and in the 'apostolic enactments he (Bishop du Chemin) is given no other title except that 'of 'Bishop of Babylon'.

"As to the second request the Sacr. (Consistorial) Congregation has replied to his 'Eminence, the Prefect of the Sacr. Congregation de Prop. Fide, that the latter should 'notify Monsignor du Chemin that he need not attach any weight to the mistakes that 'were made—there had been one in issuing the decree of the Sacr. Cong. de Prop. Fide 'of 12.11.1657, where the see of Isfahan is stated to be 'annexed' (joined) to the church 'of Baghdad. From that one a graver mistake arose in the Bull of Alexander VII, in 'which the one diocese is confused with the other and not only were they considered as 'united, but as one and a single diocese, it being continually called 'of Baghdad or Isfahan', 'whereas it is evident that they are two distinct sees little less than 1,000 miles distant the 'one from the other: on 6.9.1632 they were given separate prelates . . . and they have 'never been considered as united; but merely in 1632 the Bishop of Baghdad was made 'coadjutor of Isfahan: and in 1638 the Sacr. Cong. ordered that Fr. Bernard, who had 'succeeded to the see of Baghdad, should be Vicar Apostolic of Isfahan. . . ."³

Bishop du Chemin must have been powerfully protected at the French Court—or perhaps

¹ See *S.R.*, vol. 421, p. 438 *et seq.*, and *S.R.*, vol. 422, p. 146.

² *Idem*, vol. 424, p. 197.

³ See also *Idem*, vol. 517, p. 166 *et seq.*

it is merely one example of Gallican attitude towards the disciplinary jurisdiction of the Holy See at that period—for him to pay no heed to the injunctions of the Congregation in Rome: because at least two more attempts were made to move him and failed: i.e. a minute of 14.12.1671¹ records:

“In September last there was delivered to Mgr the Bishop of Baghdad a ‘precept’, by which he was instructed to betake himself to his residence within six months, and he was threatened, should he not do so, with the punishment of being deprived not only of his see, but also of the income from it; but till now apparently he has not bethought himself of performing his duties . . .”, and orders were issued by their Eminences: “Let Placid du Chemin be notified that, once the time-limit allotted him by this ‘precept’ be elapsed, he is not to hope for any further delay, or payment of money. . . .”

Then in 1673 another minute stated that the Pope was ‘ready to fulminate the penalties, when the ambassador of France asked for the rigours to be suspended. . . .’ Again, when news had reached Rome that a number of leading Armenian traders of Julfa had been forced by Shah Sulaiman to apostatize, and in the Session of the Sacr. Congregation, 26.6.1674, it was suggested by Cardinal Nino that the absence of the Bishop of Baghdad from Isfahan might contribute to that state of affairs, the Cardinals issued the rescript:

“So long as the Bishop of Babylon continues contumacious, let a Vicar Apostolic be deputed to administer the diocese in his stead. . . . In the meantime let proceedings be taken against the aforesaid Bishop. . . .”

There seems to be ground, indeed, for assuming that it was the continued failure of first Bishop Bernard and then Bishop du Chemin of Baghdad, both of them Regulars, to reside in their districts, which led to the promulgation by Alexander VII of the decree “Super residentia episcopum regularium” (“Quia ecclesia (Haspanen) inter schismatos constituta”), dated 26.7.1662. Whatever transpired after the issue of that rescript, Bishop Placid du Chemin was at the time, by his own account, then already aged 73—obviously unfitted to undertake such a journey and to go out for the first time to an Eastern climate, under the severe conditions of that century: he lived another eight years, the minutes of the Sacr. Cong. at the session of 26.1.1683 recording notification of his death.

Briefly, therefore, by 1683 the position was that, whereas the two bishoprics of Isfahan and Baghdad had been (in 1632) created together, in those 51 years no Bishop of Isfahan had resided in Persia, and for less than the two years, 1640–2, one Bishop of Baghdad had been in the East. Meanwhile, as early as 1.2.1669, the Nuncio in Paris had been requested to find someone who would prove a good coadjutor for Bishop du Chemin. A

“former tutor of the king of France had proposed François Picquet, known to your Eminences, at present Commendatory Prior of Grimault in Provence”²

but it was not till in the General Session of the Congregation in Rome, 18.12.1674, Cardinal Nino reported:

“The approval of our lord Pope having been obtained on June 27th, a letter was written ‘to the Nuncio, who . . . proposed for the above-mentioned vicariate, firstly, Picquet. . . .’”³

(François Picquet, born at Lyons, 17.4.1626, had been consul of France and a missionary in lay clothing at Aleppo from 1652 to 1660.)⁴

The *Acta* of the Session go on:

¹ S.R., vol. 431, p. 229.

² *Idem*, vol. 419, p. 345: he received 1,000 scudi yearly for his office.

³ *Vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, quoting *Acta* for 1674, p. 387.

⁴ His life was published, *Vie de Messire François Picquet, consul de France et de Hollande à Alep, ensuite évêque de Césarople*, by d'Anthelmy, Paris, 1732.

"... at Aleppo ... for the zeal with which he maintained the interests of the Faith "and for his teaching he was liked not only by Christians but also by schismatics, and was "not ill-considered by the very Turks. He has learnt oriental languages, and it is thought "that long experience joined to a fair knowledge of the sacred canons and doctrines can "make up for what he may lack. ... His age is 50 years, and he is free, and with no "domestic troubles. They (the cardinals) agreed on the choice of Picquet. ... In an "audience given, 22.12.1674, His Holiness gave his consent."

The proceedings were not complete, for in the General Session of 23.6.1675¹ it was decided that:

"His Holiness be begged (to grant) the title of a bishopric *in partibus infidelium*,"

which the Pope granted in an audience, 15.7.1675. A Brief issued 31.7.1675 assigned to Mgr François Picquet the titular bishopric of Caesaropolis. Not until 20.10.1677,² however, from Marseilles did he notify the Sacr. Congregation that Cardinal Grimaldi had consecrated him a short time previously: he proposed to wait till winter was over, and then start with two Capuchins and two secular priests. He did not leave Europe so soon, for from Aix, 24.4.1679, the same Cardinal wrote to the Sacr. Congregation suggesting that Bishop Picquet be authorized to settle disputes between Orders in the East, and make an apostolic visitation of Cyprus, Aleppo, Tripoli and Syria:³ and another letter of the new bishop was still dated from Marseilles 4.7.1679;⁴ but he had reached Alexandretta by 7.11.1679.⁵ Between 20.1.1680 and 3.11.1680 he was in Aleppo—perhaps before and after those dates.⁶ On 3.6.1681⁷ he wrote from Diarbakr: thence he was to make direct by caravan for Tabriz, and from Tabriz he visited Abranar in Nakhchiwan, where he arrived 14.8.1681,⁸ and whence he wrote, 20.12.1681:⁹

"I am here among very submissive Religious and in the midst of a small community "which looks on me as its protector. Everything I order carried out: in my turn I have "had to obey in two instances. They have obliged me to assume the style of an ambassador "earlier than I would have wished: and, in the last place, when I was all ready to leave "in order to pass the winter in Tabriz, they kept me here by dint of begging and beseeching "me to do so ... the authority of an ambassador is so great in Persia that it surpasses "that of any ambassador in Europe or elsewhere. I was surprised at this, but I am not sorry "to make use of it on this occasion: it is true that it will cost me heavily, notwithstanding "the instructions of the king to defray" (the expenses of) "the ambassadors and everyone "in their following (the latest one to come had 500). In the end I decided to pass the "winter in a village, where it is very comfortless and colder than Flanders, and where in "my room I have only a hole in the earth as a stove. I had to lay in a store of salt meat "for the whole winter, as if on board a ship, because here they kill neither beef nor mutton "during that season. The bread they eat is dough baked when stretched out flat, as large "as a hat, like our pancakes in Provence; but, thank God, André has learnt to make bread "and cakes."

Bishop Picquet remained in Nakhchiwan until after the end of April (*vide* his letters of 20.12.1681: 1.4.1682: 18.4.1682):¹⁰ early in July he was at Tabriz:¹¹ and on 12.7.1682 arrived in Isfahan,¹² seven years after he had been made coadjutor bishop, another instance of the leisurely manner in which such appointments were treated in that age. A letter of 25.3.1683,¹³ "kept back till 5th May," gives some account of his reception:

¹ See *Acta* for 1675, p. 166.

² *S.R.*, vol. 460, p. 330.

³ *Idem*, vol. 473, p. 76.

⁴ *Idem*, vol. 475, p. 53.

⁵ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 363.

⁶ Letters in *S.R.*, vol. 480, pp. 340-3; *Idem*, vol. 481, p. 5 *et seq.*; *S.N.R.*, I, p. 383.

⁷ *Idem*, p. 385.

⁸ *Idem*, p. 392.

⁹ *S.R.*, vol. 484.

¹⁰ *Idem*, vols. 484 and 486, p. 20; *S.N.R.*, I, pp. 419-25.

¹¹ *S.R.*, vol. 222.

¹² *Idem*, vol. 487, p. 502, letter of 27.7.1682.

¹³ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 431.

"If my letters have reached your Eminence's hands you will have already known all that passed during my stay in Armenia and my journey to Tabriz, where I found Mgr Isaac, the Armenian archbishop of S. Thaddeus, to whom, after a profession of his Catholic Faith and many signs of his sincere affection towards the Catholic Church, I handed over the Brief from the Pope, as had been enjoined on me. From Tabriz, after travelling forty-odd days on the road we reached the city, almost all ill by reason of the fatigues and the excessive heat experienced on the way. Monsieur John Baptist Casmont, the only missionary remaining of the five who had crossed the sea, after twelve days' illness ended his mission in a holy manner. The first (of the five) who died in Aleppo caused me some grief; but this one, from being such an accomplished missionary and already advanced in his knowledge of languages, prudent and fervent to a marked degree, has left a wound in my heart which will always remain.

"After three months' residence in this city" (Isfahan) "I had audience of the king, or Shah as they are wont to call him.

"I was received by him with all benignity and respect, and with some preference over all the other ambassadors. He was so gracious as to make me approach his person. He listened patiently to my discourse (which was explained afterwards by my interpreter), replied with kindly words, put to me various questions about my journey, about affairs in Europe and in particular about France, about his most Christian Majesty and his undertakings. It pleased him to hear about the bombardment of the island of Chios, and about the expedition against Algiers, which was being got ready. The audience ended with a very magnificent banquet served on dishes of gold of such sizes that for some two men were needed to carry them. But what was abundant in dishes was lacking in the matter of knives, spoons and forks, which were not to be seen: it behoved us to follow the example of the king¹ and eat the pottage of rice with our fingers and without other instrument, the other victuals similarly. The banquet lasted but a short time—such being the custom to make quick dispatch. I took leave of the Shah and retired together with the other ambassadors—of Poland, the Tatars, and the Arabs, and among others from the king of Siam, who presented a large number of most beautiful presents. It has been no small marvel to them that I, without gifts (for they have not yet arrived), have had so outstanding an audience. For the king did not talk, or have any conversation with any other whatsoever. But they (the Persian officials) are expecting the presents, the delay in arrival of which gives me very great trouble, causes me very heavy expense and keeps my hands tied without my being able to discuss any business at all, neither with the Shah nor with his officials,² as many as to whom these are to be offered: if it should be necessary to wait still another year, it would be ruination for me and shame me in the eyes of this Court. . . ."

Bishop François Picquet ended by making requests:

"I have to beg the Sacr. Congregation to be pleased to provide me with a coadjutor and successor as speedily as possible. I am old, feeble and sick: my life will not last long, and this diocese needs to be maintained and aided assiduously. . . ."

As a matter of fact, already in 1680 a minute in the records of the Sacr. Congregation raised the expediency of providing him with a coadjutor:³ and he himself had evident views of his own as to the individual suitable for the office, seeing that when at Diarbakr on his journey to Persia he had addressed in June 1681⁴ a letter to:

¹ Nobles and great tribal chieftains, leading merchants still after the Great War, 1914-8, gave their banquets or had European guests to meals in this fashion, sitting on the floor, fingers of the right hand only used in lieu of knife and fork.

² This was another point of diplomatic etiquette in those times: an envoy must have given his presents before coming to discuss the object of his mission

³ *S.R.*, vol. 477, pp. 337-8.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 385.

“Révérend Père Pidouds, Clerc Regulier Têatin

“auprès de Monseigneur de Cysique à Constantinople.

“ . . . Nous nous préparons à partir dans deux ou trois jours par une caravane qui va droit à Tauris . . . de Tauris je serai obligé de venir à Nakchivan et de visiter cette petite province d’Armeniens Catholiques qui me demandent depuis longtemps. . . . Si N.S. vous donne les mouvemens et les moyens de nous venir trouver et de vous joindre à nous, je le bénirai, et j’en aurai bien de la joie. . . . J’ai écrit une sêgonde fois à Rome pour vous avoir. J’y ferai tout mon possible. . . . Franc. Eve de Césarople,
“Vicre Apos. de Bab^e et de Perse.”

On 2.5.1684 a minute was made at Rome:

“The Father General of the Theatines explained that Fr. Louis Marie Pidou, having been called upon by orders of your Eminences to look after the interests of the mission at Constantinople, and having fully acquitted himself of all that was given him to do, begs to be employed in the conversion of the Armenians of Persia under the superintendence of Mgr Picquet, Bishop of Babylon, by whom he is desired, so he asserts. . . .”

The action taken on this was given in Latin:

“They” (the Cardinals in Congregation) “authorized travelling expenses to be charged to the monthly revenue of the bishopric of Babylon.”

A letter to Pope Innocent XI in Latin, dated 9.5.1684,¹ from Bishop Picquet makes known:

“Hamadan is a town in Persia, near Baghdad, where there dwell some Armenian Christians, to whom no (spiritual) assistance has so far been afforded by the missionaries. I shall, with God’s favour, stay at Hamadan, where I shall see what ways there are for me to get into Baghdad and reside there. At present every means of entry seems to be closed . . . the first is that I came to Persia as an envoy, the second this huge war raging between Christians and Turks. . . .”

Evidently he carried out his intention promptly, for letters of Bishop Picquet are dated from Hamadan, 20.6.1684 and 26.7.1684,² in which he wrote of being already busy making a house and chapel at Hamadan, and “of having arrived safe and sound, though at the beginning we had experienced some opposition from the enemies of the Faith. . . .”

For one reason he had found on arrival in Isfahan

“the house and church purchased in former times for the bishop” (i.e. Bishop Bernard of S. Teresa) “and sold to the Turks had collapsed in ruins and been rebuilt, and that there was no hope of getting it back unless by spending money, and it would come dearer than any other house . . . the silverware had also been sold and furniture, all this under a power of attorney and according to the prescriptions current in this country and also in Christendom. All that remains in the hands of the Capuchin Fathers are old ornaments, which they have already offered me. Had they been in good condition they would have been of great help, as I lost all mine in Turkey in an accident that happened to me on the road. . . .”³

And, for another, the Sacr. Congregation had provided him with 4,400 scudi to construct a chapel and residence in Baghdad, 3,185 scudi having been advanced to him for his journey expenses and as Vicar Apostolic:

¹ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 453.

² *Idem*, pp. 449-59.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 487, p. 502, letter of 12.7.1682.

"I arrived here" (Hamadan) "on 7.1.1685, and a little later Mgr Picquet bought this "house and paid for it in sequins 48 Tumans and somewhat over, i.e. 2,400 French lire. "But possession could not be had of it until after his death, viz. till 20.7.1686, after much "litigation. . . ."

wrote Bishop Pidou, 11.8.1699 (*S.N.R.*, III, p. 279). These facts, the construction of an episcopal residence and church—at Hamadan, not Baghdad—and the monetary interest the Sacr. Congregation had therein are to be borne in mind, when a cause for the lengthy occupation and administration of Hamadan by Carmelite Religious is sought. Shortly before 26.1.1683 Mgr Picquet had succeeded, *ipso facto*, on the death of Mgr du Chemin—the Bull confirming him in the appointment was dated 26.4.1683. But, hardly one year after his arrival in Hamadan,

"the Consul of France in Aleppo informed the Sacr. Congregation of the death of Mgr "Picquet, Bishop of Baghdad, which occurred 26.8.1685 . . . the Armenians, who during "his lifetime would not allow him inside their church, were only too happy to take and "bury him in their church. . . ."¹

"After his death, by order of the governor of Hamadan all his effects were attached and "sealed, until the governor should receive sure information as to the person duly qualified "to take possession. Monsieur Sanson came to Isfahan to obtain a certificate, signed by "all missionaries and some Europeans, witnessing to M. Sanson, Monsieur Roc and Mgr "Pidou having equal rights of inheritance, so that they might take possession, as otherwise "they would be unable to get them out of the hands of the Persians. . . . Another form "of will was said to have been made at Hamadan in the Persian or Arabic language, in "order to avoid such detention of the property. But, according to what I remember to "have read, in the true and testamentary dispositions of the said Monseigneur, which "Monsieur Sanson showed us here in order to obtain from us the certificate required, at "the commencement it was written that he" (Mgr Picquet) "did not intend to bequeath "anything at all of what he had, inasmuch as the whole came from alms-gifts and ecclesias- "tical sources, and thus was subject to the control of His Holiness and the Sacr. Congrega- "tion, but that of their benevolence he hoped that there would be allowed and set aside "for his colleagues as much for the upkeep of their mission as would be spent up till the "enquiry into this in Rome. . . ."

(Bishop Elias to Card. Prefect, 14.6.1699, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 264.) Bishop Picquet's will was found in 1721 at Hamadan—36 years after his death—reported Bishop Fedeli, 12.1.1721 (*S.R.*, vol. 634.)

Thus, once more the see of Baghdad was vacant after being occupied for some 2½ years only. On the Sacr. Congregation receiving the news the Cardinal Nuncio at Paris was requested to furnish names of a suitable successor and, in the General Session of 16.6.1687, Cardinal Altieri mentioned three persons so nominated—by the deed of endowment the

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 495; and see *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10, quoting from General Session of Cong. de Prop. Fide of 14.1.1686. For anyone interested in the biography of Mgr Fr. Picquet, the following references to his letters preserved in the archives of the Sacr. Cong. de Prop. Fide may be useful: as consul, Aleppo, 1.10.1653 and 27.6.1654, *S.R.*, vol. 135, pp. 440–7 and pp. 141–9; from Grimaud, 7.10.1670, *S.R.*, vol. 426, p. 169; 4.1.1673 in *S.R.*, vol. 441, p. 93; 30.3.1675 in *S.R.*, vol. 433, p. 242; 17.9.1675 in *S.R.*, vol. 457, p. 42; and see vol. 459, p. 104; 20.12.1675 in *S.N.R.*, I, p. 308; from Marseilles 4.7.1679 in *S.R.*, vol. 475, p. 53; from Alexandretta 7.11.1679, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 376; Aleppo, 20.1.1680, *S.R.*, vol. 477, p. 337; 12.2.1680 and 24.2.1680, *S.R.*, vol. 480, p. 340–3; 19.6.1680, *S.R.*, vol. 475; 23.6.1680 and 3.11.1680, *S.N.R.*, I, pp. 376–383; 29.7.1680 and 26.9.1680, *S.R.*, vol. 481, p. 5 *et seq.*; from Diarbakr 3.6.1681, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 385; from Abranar 14.8.1681, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 392; 20.12.1681, *S.R.*, vol. 484; 1.4.1682 and 18.4.1682, *S.R.*, vol. 486, p. 20; 1.4.1682, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 419; 18.4.1682, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 425; from Tabriz 3.7.1682, *S.R.*, vol. 222; from Isfahan 27.7.1682, *S.R.*, vol. 487, p. 502; 23.3.1683, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 431; 9.5.1684, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 453; from Hamadan 30.6.1684 and 24.7.1684, *S.N.R.*, I, pp. 449–58. In connection with the money left by Mgr Picquet—13,090 'Sevillian' piastres had been deposited by him with Murad Sarrati of Julfa in three bags—it is interesting to note that the deceased prelate had handed over this money before he went to Hamadan, so that it might be exchanged "before the circulation was prohibited, for now as new money has been coined, and the old "coinage retouched, in part allowed to remain, there are three kinds of currency—of higher, medium and lowest value . . ." (*vide*, Fr. Elias' letter, 16.1.1688, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 493).

nominee had necessarily to be a Frenchman: one of them the superior of the Jesuit missions in Syria and Persia, another the Carmelite Fr. Ferdinand of S. Liduwina, the third was Fr. Pidou, "a Theatine, native of Paris, aged about 55", the collaborator already cited of Mgr Picquet, all three

"considered by the Nuncio very precious jewels of the missions in the East, as all know
"how to read and write and speak Arabic, Turkish, Greek and Armenian, besides Latin
"and Italian, and leading very religious and virtuous lives. . . ."

Their Eminences decreed that Fr. Pidou should be proposed to His Holiness, and at an audience on 25.6.1687 the Pope gave his approval, the Bull for the appointment being dated 23.11.1687.¹

The new Bishop of Baghdad, whose full name was Louis Marie Pidou de St. Olon, brother of that Monsieur de St. Olon, a noble and official at the Court of Louis XIV, had already worked for about thirty years as a missionary, chiefly among the Armenians in Poland. (There is a letter on record,² dated 16.2.1674, from Leopoli in praise of Fr. Pidou, signed 'Joannes 'Sobieski, regii Poloniae exercitus Supremus'.) He was for ten years rector of the College for Armenians at Leopoli:³ and at the time of the invitation from Mgr Picquet he had been at Constantinople on behalf of the Theatines. Fr. Pidou had the advantage over his predecessor of being on the spot; for, as a sequel to Bishop Picquet's invitation, he had proceeded to Persia: his correspondence shows him on his way East to have left Aleppo, 20.9.1684, to have been at Diarbakr 25.10.1684⁴ and to have left Mausil, 20.11.1684, and been in Baghdad, 11.12.1684. He arrived at Hamadan, 7.1.1685, and shortly afterwards Mgr Picquet bought the premises for 48 Tumans=2,400 French livres (*S.N.R.*, II, p. 281): so he was already in Hamadan when Mgr Picquet died there: in a letter written years later⁵ he referred to "the perfidy of the "servants of the deceased prelate, one of whom had almost totally ruined him in the end . . . "and to the malice of the schismatics." According to a letter of the Chevalier d'Arvieux, written from Paris, 22.4.1688,⁶ Fr. Pidou did not wish to become bishop of Baghdad, and thrice in that year through the Cardinal Nuncio in Paris he had begged the prefect of the Sac. Congregation that his refusal should be accepted, and the Carmelite nominee appointed in his stead. His exercise of the episcopal dignity was hardly any speedier, however, than the leisurely assumption by his predecessors of their duties—not by his own fault, because there was no one to consecrate him. All 1687, 1688 and 1689 he had remained in Hamadan,⁷ where Mgr Picquet and he in turn put together a considerable library: then at the end of July 1690 he moved to Isfahan in view of notice that the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, Mgr Sebastian Knab, O.P., had been instructed to consecrate him, arriving there, 16.8.1690,⁸ only to learn a little later that on the journey Mgr Knab had died, 8.9.1690.⁹

Mgr Pidou was nearly 60 years of age; the estate left by Mgr Picquet was the subject of Persian litigation, and not available, even the ownership of the residence the latter had acquired at Hamadan being disputed. Mgr Pidou, therefore, is found in a letter of 28.3.1691¹⁰ begging the Cardinal Prefect

'to release him from the intolerable burden of the episcopal office, or else to provide him 'with some means of supporting the missionaries' (i.e. the chaplains from France) 'he had 'with him, and of establishing this mission through the agency of the director of the Seminary 'for Foreign Missions at Paris'.

'Repeated letters had been written by the king of France to the Grand Sufi' (i.e. the

¹ *Vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5, by late Fr. L. Lemmens.

² *S.R.*, vol. 447, p. 94; among others there is also a letter of his from Rome, 28.7.1673, in *S.R.*, vol. 441, p. 92.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 468.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 509, letter of 31.1.1689.

⁵ See his letters written thence of 6.10.1687, *S.N.R.*, I; 19.2.1688; 31.1.1689, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 509; 29.11.1689.

⁶ *Vide* his letters 14.4.1690 and 30.6.1690 from Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 509 *et seq.*

⁷ *S.R.*, vol. 511.

¹⁰ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 1.

Shah), 'but except for an honourable lodging the Court had temporarily assigned to him, 'and some allowance indifferently paid, he did not know what to hope from payments 'made from the recovery of Mgr Picquet's estate'—

he stated in a letter a month later.¹ He had at that time assisting him three French secular priests, Pères Sanson, of the Sorbonne, Roc and Gaudereau from the Seminary for Foreign Missions at Paris, and two Franciscan Tertiaries:

'Being unable to keep up the mission at Hamadan without a residence for himself as 'bishop, he had been offered a very fine house in Julfa by one of the heads of the Catholics 'there, which'—so Fr. Pidou opined—'will serve us as episcopal palace.'

French policy at that period in the East, as elsewhere, was *accaparatif* and assertive, and these young graduates from the Sorbonne and the Seminary at Paris too had the interests of France at heart, set on staking an exclusive claim where they worked. On the other hand, although acting as administrator and vicar apostolic of the diocese of Isfahan, the bishop-elect of Baghdad was not justified in counting on remaining permanently in residence in the chief centre of another bishopric, and acquiring a fixed property stake there. This explains a conflict of interests which arose between the French Mgr Pidou and his chaplains and the Belgian Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites in particular, as set out by the latter later on to the Sacr. Congregation:²

'Markar Sarrat' (i.e. Shariman) 'had the intention of providing an episcopal residence 'for a bishop, and offered a fine house to Mgr Pidou, so that he might occupy it in the 'name of the Sacr. Congregation. . . . He intended to found some fund for the maintenance 'of a bishop, who, he desires, should be designated with the title "of Isfahan", as he had 'urged: so he is negotiating to purchase certain villages of Armenians, which already have 'thirty families settled, whence the bishop appointed can draw temporal revenues, and 'where he could exercise pastoral functions.

'Fr. Sanson, one of Mgr Pidou's chaplains, did not like the terms of this offer, his object 'being to establish himself in Julfa as depending solely on the Seminary for Foreign Missions 'at Paris.'³

Some friction arose out of this, and Markar Shariman tritely replied to reproaches of Fr. Sanson that his object was to unite the Armenians concerned to the Holy See, not to the *Seminaire des Missions Étrangères à Paris*.⁴ This friction was increased, and complaint made to Rome⁵ by the Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites, because of a dispensation given by Père Sanson for a marriage of one of the Shariman family within the degrees of affinity, to the scandal of the schismatic population of Julfa; Mgr Pidou gave a written decision as to its validity, and another of his chaplains was present in the house of the Shariman concerned when without witnesses and without the proper formalities or any ritual he purported to have joined the parties concerned in matrimony. Following that incident, the Armenian notable in question agreed that

¹ Mgr Pidou, Isfahan, 21.4.1691, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 3.

² *S.R.*, vol. 517.

³ "Afterwards Monsieur Sanson (I being present) bought the house at Isfahan in the suburb of Julfa for some 120 "Tumans = 6,000 French lire—I do not remember exactly—and I took possession of it, 4.11.1690, after much opposition "from the schismatic Armenians and to the displeasure of other Latin Catholics . . ." (*vide* Bishop Pidou's letter, Hamadan, 11.8.1699, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 279).

⁴ *Vide* Fr. Elias' letter to Sacr. Cong., 1.10.1693, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 87:

" . . . the house which Mr. Marcar had promised for a bishop to be sent by His Holiness and the Sacr. Cong. and "I myself did my best to give possession of it in that name to Mgr Pidou, but, as he would not do so, unless in the name "of the Seminary in Paris, they remained without it. . . ."

⁵ Fr. Elias, 8.1.1693, *S.R.*, vol. 517; *idem*, 23.2.1694, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 95.

'Mgr Pidou should go and preach and officiate for a time in the church which Fr. Elias had helped to found some 12 years before, and where the Armenian rite was used under his direction, and the Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites was in the habit of singing Mass in the Latin rite'.

On the other hand Mgr Pidou, the bishop-elect of Baghdad, was frequently addressing the Sacr. Congregation with regard to the limits of his jurisdiction and his residence, e.g. on 3.3.1694:¹

"Mgr the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan has at last reached here" (this was Fr. Paul Baptist Hovannes, O.P.) "and says he has a special order from our Holy Father to consecrate me" . . . as soon as Monseigneur has got through his embassy to the Court and obtains "permission to go out of doors". . . although it is almost morally impossible for me to "return here in order to go to Basra, in case that place be declared to belong to the diocese of Baghdad and peaceful conditions reign there. I think that I can without scruples "return to Hamadan, which I consider to be within my jurisdiction . . . I beg you again "to have assigned to the diocese of Baghdad all the country in the rule of Turkey and "Persia . . . up to Hamadan and Qazwin inclusive, to be detached from this province "of Isfahan. . . ."

Further, according to a minute on record in the archives of the Sacr. Congregation, under late 4.5.1694, the Jesuit Fathers at Julfa had also made, or had a move made for independence:

"They ask that the privileges granted to missionaries in India may be allowed to them "too, as they are" (in Isfahan) "at the gates of the Indies, and that . . . by a special "indulgence these (privileges) may be considered definite and fixed and maintained against "all attacks by 'French missionaries and clerics or anyone else'. . . ."

All these manœuvres by interested parties to appropriate special positions, while there was no one to defend and uphold the rights and due interest of the bishopric of Isfahan, appear to have combined to impress the Sacr. Congregation unfavourably, and to decide it to revive the bishopric, now in abeyance for 60 years: so that, when in the General Session of the Sacr. Congregation of 4.5.1693

'Cardinal d'Estrées reported: "The Catholics of Isfahan repeat their request for an arch- "bishop to be appointed in that capital city . . ."' :⁴

and in the audience which the Secretary had with the Pope provision was made, and a Bull was issued nominating Fr. Elias of S. Albert himself to be Bishop of Isfahan, 26.10.1693, whilst in the complaints quoted above it was minuted that:

"Monsignor the Secretary states that, as to the 'palace' for the bishop it will suffice to "send orders for possession to be taken in favour of Fr. Elias, appointed Bishop of Isfahan, "for whom the Bulls have been dispatched. As to the so-called 'marriage', no bishop has "the faculty to give a dispensation first of all, besides which the necessary consent appears "to have been lacking and perhaps the presence of the parish priest, such not being proved

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 97.

² He was consecrated, 9.5.1694, in the church of the Jesuits at Julfa, *vide* his letters of 29.6.1694, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 97 and p. 104. After his consecration Bishop Pidou left Isfahan, 12th July, in a *kajawa* on the back of a mule, reaching Hamadan, 17.7.1694, where the Armenian schismatic clergy received him "with pleasure", *vide* his letter, 4.8.1694, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 106, from Hamadan.

³ Strict etiquette in regard to ambassadors provided that until after the official first audience they were not permitted to leave their lodgings.

⁴ See *Acta* for 1693, p. 75. Cf. *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5, by late Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M.

"to be the priest sent by Mgr Pidou, who was not yet consecrated and not within his jurisdiction."

In the *Vita P. F. Elia a S. Alberto*¹ by Lay Brother Francis of S. Sirus, it is stated that Fr. Elias had himself suggested a certain Armenian friar for appointment as Bishop of Isfahan, and that in 1693 Pope Innocent XII sent for a son of Khwajeh Murad Shariman, who was in Rome, asking for information regarding the person proposed, and received the reply: "Holy Father, we Catholics want no other bishop than Fr. Elias." The Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites had himself written, 1.10.1693:²

"We were also greatly encouraged by the hope which your Excellency gave us, that in the first Congregation there would be a fresh discussion about making an 'archbishop' for the Armenian people at Isfahan, while having every consideration for and pleasing the Armenian Sharimans by giving them their own shepherd. . . ."

It is probable that in part the Sacr. Congregation was moved to recommend the appointment of a bishop at Isfahan because of the endowments promised, according to Fr. Elias' letters, by the Shariman brothers—a promise which had no stability, inasmuch as there was no safe, assured endowment fund: almost from the beginning it failed and involved the bishops appointed in a penurious and crippled existence.

The Shariman, or Sarrat, family (in Italian usually spelt Scerimani), of whom mention has already several times been made, had given evidence of zealous generosity for the cause of the propagation of the Catholic Faith: thus, referring to the opening of a Carmelite Residence in Julfa, Fr. Elias of S. Albert in his letter of 24.7.1691³ spoke of Khwajeh Murad Shariman:

"by the generosity of whom we have not only a fine and commodious Residence, but also sustenance for two or three missionaries who will be able to exist there without other funds, so long as the capital they have provided lasts. . . ."

A son of Khwajeh Markar Shariman died and left to the new foundation a 'Hammam' (or Persian vapour bath) which from its use by the public brought in 60 Roman scudi annually, so that with the 200 Tumans from a 'trustee' deposit in charge of the Shariman family an income of 18 Tumans annually was obtained. Now, too, they were offering to maintain any bishop, who might be appointed to the see of Isfahan:

"Khwajeh Markar Shariman had already made a present of a very fine 'palace'" (the subject of the dispute with Mgr Pidou) "together with 3,000–4,000 scudi, which he promises to invest in some funds, in order to give a start to the bishopric. . . ."⁴

In other directions, too, the Shariman family had gained prestige in the eyes of the authorities in Italy: a letter from Isfahan, dated 10.10.1694,⁵ mentions that Markar Shariman had given 200,000 ducats to the Republic of Venice "to aid it in the war against the Turks", and to that loan there was allusion in Fr. Elias' letter to the Sacr. Congregation, 1.10.1693:⁶

"there was much satisfaction over the employment of part of this money under the direction of the Nuncio in Venice, and we hope that no less advantage will accrue from what is done with the rest, on the advice and with the help of the Cardinals. . . ."

At this point—the relative situation as regards the two bishoprics of Baghdad and Isfahan having been made clear as far as the end of Shah Sulaiman's reign—it is convenient to break

¹ O.C.D. 320 c.

⁴ S.N.R., II, p. 3.

² S.N.R., II, p. 87, Fr. Elias.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 114.

³ O.C.D. 238 u.

⁶ *Idem*, p. 87.

off the recital of developments in Julfa, in order to unravel the domestic position of the Carmelite posts during the period.

* * * * *

* * * *

Whereas the Carmelite mission in Persia and Portuguese India may be termed to have lived its 'apostolic era', marked by the tireless energy of men of outstanding capacity who had made some small way among the Muslims, during the reign of the first 'Abbas—with less result to show in that of his successor—to have been at its most extensive range of proselytization among non-Muslims during the reign of the second 'Abbas—the span of nearly thirty years under Shah Sulaiman leaves two impressions on the student, viz. in the first half neglect and quasi-abandonment, the few Religious of a calibre inferior to that of their predecessors, while the latter half saw almost every other interest in Persia and India ignored to allow for a concentrated and vigorous attempt to bring the Armenians of Julfa to union with the Holy Roman See.

As to numbers, the Religious in Persia were in no wise to blame and deserve commiseration. In 1669:¹

"There are only four houses and three Religious. . . ."

Actually, according to a list of 1671² supplied to the Sacr. Congregation by the Praepositus General, Fr. Alexander of Jesus, there were six Fathers in the four houses, Isfahan, Shiraz, Basra, Tatta, seven at Goa, one at Diu, and one on the Malabar coast: of these fifteen in priest's orders three were Poles, three Portuguese, three Neapolitans, two Lombards, one Roman, one Fleming, one Belgian and one Frenchman: seven of them already over 50 years old, and two over 60 years of age. Another list of that year supplied by the Procurator of the Mission³ adds the name of another French Father at Bandar 'Abbas. Death had reduced numbers to a level almost unworkable in Persia proper and Basra; the account of conditions in the mission cited above—it had been presented on the instructions of the Secretary to the Sacr. Congregation, Mgr Baldeschi—noted:

"In the past 13 years, inclusive of those of other Orders, 25 Religious have died in the 'Levant. . . ."

As one Carmelite graphically put it:⁴

"Our missions are in a very bad state: we remain scarcely one Religious for each House, "and of those who remain three or four have one foot in the grave . . ."

and from Basra Fr. Jerome wrote appealingly to Rome:⁵

"Here I am alone, without a companion. . . . I have no one here to whom to make "my confession—very humbly, for the love of our Lord, I beg you, our Father General, "to aid us as soon as possible by sending us Religious: . . . the Lord himself, when sending "his first missionaries out into the world, sent them with companions—*binos misit*—two "and two. . . ."

The same day to a Definitor General he wrote sadly:

¹ Fr. Angelus, 25.3.1669, O.C.D. 238 l.

⁴ Fr. Angelus, 14.1.1671, O.C.D. 236 l.

² S.R., vol. 428, p. 135.

⁵ 17.2.1671, O.C.D. 241 l.

³ *Idem*, p. 224.

"If you, Father, only knew how badly things are going in the missions for lack of
"Religious . . ."

and he cited one defect which detracted from the usefulness of their work:

" . . . The changing from place to place in the Missions is very prejudicial: here have
"I worked very hard to learn the Persian language, and I am practised in Isfahan business
"and ways: there I was known to the principal officials at the Court, and sometimes was
"summoned to translate letters from Christian princes sent to the Court, so that that was
"always some protection. . . ."

Two years later, 1673, the position had even grown worse: ironically Fr. Angelus wrote:¹

" . . . to think that this is a *province* of 5 Religious . . . separated twenty, forty, eighty
"days' journey from one another, and the Vicar Provincial away from them for 3 or 4 years
"in India, getting news of them barely every two years . . .!!"

"The chief need is of missionaries who will follow the Observance: six are needed. . . ,"
wrote Fr. Jerome in 1675.²

"I consider it very necessary that first of all the Houses and Residences we have at
"present in Syria, Arabia, Persia and India be provided with missionaries—each House
"with at least three, inclusive of those already there, together with one lay brother to
"look after the sacristy and domestic matters: and with sufficient money to feed them.
"As the funds we have from Naples are insufficient to maintain so many persons . . . it
"would be necessary for the Sacr. Congregation to augment from its own funds our yearly
"grant, i.e. at least 50 scudi annually for each House and Residence . . .",

the Procurator from the Missions had represented to the Sacr. Cong. in 1671.³ These represen-
tations had some effect, for the Procurator General at Rome in 1676 named 6 Fathers and
one lay brother sent out to Persia;⁴ but the position does not seem to have been always
understood:

"There are only 8 Religious in Persia, and our Fr. General orders me to have five at
"Isfahan and three at each of the other posts,"

exclaimed in perplexity the Visitor General and Vicar Provincial of 1678,⁵ while one of the
Religious at Isfahan comments:

"The Visitor General has posted three Religious in Isfahan . . . impossible! as the
"House cannot support them. Living is very dear in this country, and often there is lack
"of food. We exist in great poverty here. . . ."⁶

In the provision of missionaries there was at times a conflict of views between the Sacr.
Congregation and the Discalced Carmelite Order—for instance, over establishment of a mission
on the Malabar coast, in which the Sacr. Congregation had taken a strong interest, since it
had first dispatched as its Commissary to India in 1656 Fr. Joseph of S. Mary, a Carmelite
(later Bishop of Bisignano in Italy), and from the 1660's Fr. Cornelius of S. Cyprian and
Fr. Matthew and others of the Order had been stationed there.

¹ 3.1.1673, O.C.D. 236 i.
⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 461, p. 141.

² 3.9.1675, *Idem*, 238 q.
⁵ O.C.D. 242 a, 21.3.1678, Fr. John Baptist.

³ Fr. Valerius, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 252.
⁶ *Idem*, 237 k, 20.3.1679.

Under date, 1.4.1675, there is on record a protest by the Praepositus General of the Dis-
solced Carmelites, Fr. John Chrysostom of S. Paul;¹ he had asked sanction for one Carmelite
to be withdrawn from Malabar, and been instructed to send two Religious in his place. He
addressed the Sacr. Congregation

“to be so good as not to burden his Order with those new missions when, on account of
“the scarcity of persons suitable, some having been lost by death and there being no suitable
“candidates to be found, with difficulty he would be able to keep up the number for the
“other missions . . . notwithstanding all efforts made to send missionaries the Residences
“have not a sufficient staff and others have been abandoned.

“Now that he has returned from visitations he finds a letter from the Sacr. Congregation,
“in which it is notified him that the Sacr. Congregation has destined for the new missions
“on the Malabar coast four Religious of his Order, and he is instructed to be careful to
“remit in due course to those Fathers, when they have reached the Malabar coast, the
“stipend fixed, and in case any of the Fathers in question fail to arrive to supply others
“from the convent in Goa. . . . The truth is, and necessity compels him humbly to
“represent to the Sacr. Congregation that, without leaving destitute the missions supported
“by his Order in Syria and Persia and India, he is unable to look after the mission in
“Malabar . . . : in Syria . . . in Mt. Lebanon for many years past there has been but
“a single Religious, to the small edification of the Order . . . while it is necessary to send
“some individuals to Persia where at the Convent in Isfahan they are too few to keep up
“the Observance and to staff, as should be, the Residences dependent on it. . . . So he
“begs your Eminences to be so good as to consider that not only missionaries cannot be
“taken away from those missions to supply those on the Malabar coast, but that the latter
“are in actual need of provision being made for them: and he had been hoping to avail
“himself for that purpose of three of those whom the Sacr. Congregation has destined for
“the new mission in Malabar. . . . Therefore he trusts . . . your Eminences will be
“pleased not to burden his Order with a load it cannot carry, and not force it to accept
“the providing and care for the mission on the Malabar coast. . . .”

That protest is the more remarkable because, with the exception of that at Basra, the
Malabar mission alone of all the posts in charge of the Carmelites in 1675 has existed to this
twentieth century, and moreover like all missions in that part of India has worked in fertile
oil, and rendered untold fold in conversions and the flourishing Catholic community created
in the course of the centuries: so that the instructions recorded in that protest are an instance
of real far-sightedness on the part of the Sacr. Congregation, for which the Order today can
be grateful:

“Let the Father General be admonished regarding the missions abandoned without the
“permission and knowledge of the Sacr. Congregation, and let him state which they are.
“. . . Also let a communication be written to him pointing out that from the beginning
“and always the mission on the Malabar coast has belonged to his Order, and many of his
“brethren have been sent there.²

“Let him notify” (the Sacr. Cong.) “the names of all the Religious who have studied in
“the College of S. Pancrazio, and the convents where they are at present staying, together
“with notes on the qualifications of each. . . .”

This was, presumably, one of those phases when the mind of the Order was less inclined
to missionary outlets, and vocations fewer; but, largely, the barrenness of this period in Persia
and elsewhere was a question of financing the missions. Of the total sum remitted to Persia
during the thirty years under review, or during any consecutive span of years, there was no
record observed in the archives examined, but only in isolated years, e.g. in 1667 at Aleppo:

¹ S.R., vol. 464, p. 188.

² Fr. Joseph of S. Mary was again sent to Malabar in 1659.

"1,200 scudi sent by the Sacr. Congregation for the Carmelites of Persia with some other "money had been employed locally at Aleppo to appease the persecution raised by the "false Christians of the region against the Carmelites in Aleppo. . . ."¹

In 1668 400 sequins were brought by the Visitor General:² in 1669 the Vicar Provincial wrote that: "333 'abbasi was to be the allowance for one year for two Religious at Shiraz" (i.e. at 50 'abbasi each, some 6½ Tumans in all):³ in 1671 the Syndic of the Order sent out by the Procurator of the Missions 1,020 scudi "to be distributed in Persia and Syria" according to orders of the Definitory General.⁴ Yet by 1678 the Visitor General and Vicar Provincial was writing:⁵

"The three missions in Persia" (i.e. Isfahan, Shiraz, Basra), "despite the small number "of Religious, are in debt for 10,000" (? 'abbasi).

A letter from Isfahan of 24.9.1691⁶ lamented that:

"our allowances detained in Aleppo for two years past have not yet arrived. We are "greatly in debt. . . ."

Even more than irregularity of receipt of funds from Europe unwise 'banking' and investment of a small capital accumulated as a reserve in past years crippled the missions in Persia: there are several references to this. About 1671 a Hindu 'bunia' at Isfahan had defaulted with 20 Tumans: at Shiraz a Muslim with 7 Tumans;⁷ but far more painful was the realization that a sum of 200 Tumans deposited with the Carmelites in Shiraz in consideration for perpetual Masses for her soul by Ismi Gioerida⁸ had been lost with insolvent traders—one Prior of Isfahan had, contrary to standing instructions, placed the whole amount with a single money-lender, instead of spreading out the risk:

"The reason why we lost the greater part of our little capital, i.e. about 300 Tumans "(4,500 écus) about 2 years ago in the hands of the Hindus, and 110 Tumans this year "in the hands of a certain Ramchand, also a Hindu, is our lack of knowledge of business. "I think we ought not to put out more than 50 Tumans in one place. . . ."⁹

¹ The French consul at Aleppo, 16.3.1667, *S.R.*, vol. 238, p. 31 *et seq.* ² O.C.D. 237 d, letter of 3.4.1668.

³ Fr. Dionysius, 13.4.1669, O.C.D. 238 s. ⁴ 6.6.1671, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 278 ⁵ O.C.D. 238 k, 13.8.1678; 11.9.1678.

⁶ Fr. Elias, O.C.D. 238 u. ⁷ O.C.D. 236 i, 27.4.1671 and 30.4.1671.

⁸ This lady, *alias* Maria Rosa, the youngest of the sisters of Ma'ni Gioerida, P. della Valle's first wife and mentioned by him several times in his letters of 1619 and 1620, when she was 5 or 6 years old, was still alive in Shiraz in 1672, "had "remained a Catholic all her life, though she had been the wife of three Dutch 'generals' " (presumably heads of the Dutch East Indies Company in Persia): "she was then a widow with two daughters, had given generous support to the mission at Shiraz and wanted permission to retire to Rome, in view of molestation suffered, for she had some 30,000 piastres capital" (*vide S.R.*, vol. 444, p. 248, Fr. Joseph Antony, Capuchin, 2.11.1672). "In 1675, however, she had been fined 50 Tumans "in the persecution of the Christians in Shiraz" (O.C.D. 238 a, 15.10.1675).

⁹ At the enquiry by the Visitor General in 1678 into these losses one of the replies furnished by a Religious, blamed for carelessness, bears quotation here because of the side-light it throws on the trading of Chardin, afterwards and still well known in England and widely read because of the memoirs of his *Travels*, and on transactions of the kind. Ninety-two Tumans had been given on loan to a Muslim named Mirza, and when the Religious concerned went to Shiraz for the Congress another 8 Tumans (100 Tumans in all), interest being taken in advance, and two great carpets received as a pledge or guarantee from Mirza, who was considered an upright man, with large credit, the security deposited being all in gold and precious stones. Shortly afterwards another Prior was made,

"there being in our House at Isfahan at the time a guest, the Calvinist trader named Monsieur Chardin. He had already "had several profitable dealings with Mirza the Muslim, and finally gave him some clocks to sell, but afterwards some "days later asked for the clocks back, or their price (the whole thing might be worth about 10 Tumans). Mirza replied "that the clocks had been given on trial to certain grandees, and he could not take them away so abruptly; but would "either return them or pay the price within a few days. Thereupon Monsieur Chardin pretended to be content, and, as "if going on to another matter of business, told Mirza to bring him a necklace of pearls on pawn, worth about 50 Tumans, "saying that he would advance him 30 Tumans against this article in pawn. No sooner said than done: the Muslim "brought the pearls: Chardin takes them into his hand, and Mirza received from him the promise to pay 30 Tumans, "Chardin promising to count out to him next day that sum. But instead of doing so, Chardin refused, and kept the "necklace, which belonged to a slave of the King who, when unable to recover a certain sum on his pearls, began to "make an outcry. Mirza did all possible to get the money to settle with M. Chardin for the clocks and did so, except "for some 2 Tumans. M. Chardin would not restore the pearls. . . ."

Undoubtedly one principal reason for the insufficiency of the endowment fund left by the Baron di Caccuri to support both a seminary and a number of mission posts in Persia was that in the course of 70 years the money available had been used to finance entirely independent foundations in Syria, as well as places in India. A Brief of Pope Alexander VII¹ regarding the constitution of the Carmelite seminary outside the Porta San Pancrazio at Rome provided that:

'the income of the missions, on which the seminarists of the convent and the missionaries in the missions are supported, should be administered by the Praepositus General and Definitory General of the Order who should depute a capable Syndic, who will have charge of that and who each year will render accounts to Mgr the Secretary of the Congregation. The administration was to be confirmed, i.e. renewed every 5 years.'

In 1677 the sum received by the Seminary at San Pancrazio was 1,173 scudi: the rest of the yield of the Caccuri fund was spent on the missions.² The accounts³ furnished by the Vicar General (Fr. Vincent Mary of S. Catharine of Siena) on 12.3.1678 show:

"Receipts: from the Baron di Caccuri's endowment invested in Luoghi "di Monti	scudi 1272
"Expenditure: "(a) on the Seminary at San Pancrazio, 24 students at present, and "rector, vice-rector and two readers in controversy and "Arabic ⁴	900
"(b) on 15 Religious in 5 Residences "Mt. Lebanon "Aleppo "Basra "Shiraz "Isfahan, at 50 scudi each	750 1650"

i.e. expenditure was some 380 scudi in excess of income.

Obviously the reader today finds it strange that more than half the expenditure should go to the training school, where the numbers including rectors and lecturers are almost double those maintained on the missions, and clearly many of the students would never find a place in those five mission posts (only three of which belonged to that Mission for which the Baron originally made the bequest). This was also the impression made by the system on the Visitor General who in March 1683, before returning to the East and making his visitation, wrote:⁵

"... a miserable provision is now made for the missions out of the proceeds of the Baron di Caccuri's endowment, which do not at present amount to more than 1,460 scudi, 800 of which are spent on the upkeep of the Seminary of San Pancrazio: this reduces the sum for the missions to 660 scudi, and this usually is swallowed up in journey expenses for the missionaries sent: for this reason we see the missions experiencing great penury. . . ."

He addressed the Procurator General of the Order once more, 13.10.1683:

"I well know in what dire need the missions are for want of the allowances: nor did I fail to represent this to our Fathers, when I was in Rome, although fruitlessly, because

¹ S.R., vol. 435, p. 47.

² *Idem*, vol. 465.

³ *Idem*, vol. 468, p. 120.

⁴ An article signed "P. T." in an issue of the *Osservatore Romano* at the end of March 1937—"L'antico Seminario di San Pancrazio"—states that in 1662 the "Seminary of S. Paul" was removed from the convent of S. Maria della Vittoria to San Pancrazio: that the course was for 2 years, but from 1691 three years: that usually the number of students was at least 12, but in 1647 reached 47, from 1720 till the looting and devastation of the Seminary by the republicans in 1798 the students were only 5 or 6.

⁵ S.R., vol. 486, p. 385 *et seq.*

"the Father Syndic asserted there was nothing to send them: and I also know that, unless "they are soon provided, either it will be necessary for all our missionaries to abandon the "missions, or else sell up and pawn everything, to the great hurt of the missions. The "thought" (i.e. in Rome) "is all for San Pancrazio and the Seminary there . . . whereas "it is far more important that the missions should be provided with their needs than that "the Seminary should be kept up full of Religious, out of ostentation. It is of small use "to send me as Visitor and Superior, if they do not give anything with which to succour "the missions financially. . . . Those poor Religious, who besides remaining there deprived "of all consolation are also left without monetary aid. . . .

"O God! that it should be possible for income from investments expressly left to provide "food for ministers of the Gospel should have to be used in what (at least for some time) "could be retrenched, not only without harm to the Order but for its benefit, I cannot "get to understand! . . ."¹

In Basra, even more than at Shiraz, the Carmelite Residence was subjected to an additional imposition—the expense entailed by the obligation of hospitality to a considerable number of guests, travellers mainly between Europe and India, who might have to wait months at Basra for a ship, or for a caravan, e.g. in 1667²

"Cette maison est accablée de passagers chrétiens sur tout le temps de la motion, et il "faut faire des dépenses indispensables auxquelles l'on ne pence pas à Rome. . . ."

In 1678:

"This is the season when the ships come and there are still arriving many foreign Religious, who are leaving for Portugal or for Rome. . . . I am with them whole months, "twenty persons eating in the house, and, when they go, they leave the gratitude of Religious "—"Deo gratias".³

It was exceptional when such hospitality received the monetary acknowledgment due; but in 1680 (whether, and for how many years, it was paid, did not transpire) there is this note:⁴

"The Prince of Portugal honoured us with a letter written with his own hand in the "month of February 1678 in which he told us he had given orders to his Factors in India "to assign an annual pension to this Residence on account of the great expenses incurred "here in passages for his compatriots. . . ."

The special trials which, following the replacement of Arab by Turk officials in control of Basra, were the lot of the Carmelites there in regard to repairs to their church and Residence are narrated in that section of this book dealing with the Residence at Basra.

As to conditions at the Residence at Shiraz there is little recorded in this reign: in fact the Religious stationed there in 1669–70, making a "Note of what had been done in this "mission in the space of this year",⁵ added that he could find nothing written down regarding the previous year. He had baptized two adults, one of 40 years of age, and a Muhammadan girl who died, and one boy:

"Two Armenians made a profession of Catholic Faith before death. The Catholic "Christians of Shiraz are the most in numbers in all Persia. This is because there are many "households, and of men of position. On all feast-days a sermon is preached and the "Sacraments administered. We have further four catechumens. Their children are taught

¹ Fr. Agnellus, O.C.D. 241 a.

³ Fr. Aurelius of S. Augustine, 11.5.1678, O.C.D. 241 e.

⁴ Fr. Agathangelus, O.C.D. 241 c, 1.11.1680.

² Fr. Angelus, 24.6.1667, O.C.D. 241 d.

⁵ O.C.D. 238 s.

"Christian doctrine, to read, write and languages. As there is no other Order except ours
"we have constantly to give hospitality to Religious, to priests and laymen . . ."

and the Procurator Fr. Valerius¹ on his way to Isfahan and Rome in August 1669 observed that at Shiraz, besides a few moribund children baptized and heretic Europeans converted, "more could be done with the Armenians, of whom more than 25 came to our church on "feast-days. . . ." In 1675 there was persecution for some cause unexplained, Fr. Celsus writing of ²

"the turmoil, through which we are passing, and how they put me in prison, making me "pay 2 Tumans, and how to escape chains and the rest two Tumans were spent: the "persecution is more and more fanatical, the Khan having sentenced Ismi Khan to pay "50 Tumans . . . we are at our last gasp, to the great ignominy of the name of 'Franks'."

In 1678 there was

"great penury reigning in Shiraz, things costing four and five times as much as previously,"³

while in 1688

"this town, so delightful in former times . . . was reduced to such a deplorable condition "by the extraordinary, continual rain, that not only a great part of the buildings, but also "a large proportion of the populace was ruined,"

this being followed by an epidemic when "thousands died in a day".⁴

Next it may be noticed that from this period, and more especially from the time of the establishment by the French 'Royal Company of the East Indies', Bandar 'Abbas,⁵ the modern site of the old Gāmbnun, began to receive visits from the Carmelites of longer or shorter duration: the first appears to have been that of 1667, Fr. Matthew of S. Joseph 'baptizing children'⁶ —"he baptized 17 Muslims in seven months".⁷ In 1669 the Vicar Provincial staying there "was altogether maintained by the director of the French company, M. Nicolas Mariage". This chaplaincy "was useful",⁸ he wrote, "but to be served only from December to March: "from June to October there was nothing to be done because of the climate." In September 1670 Fr. Athanasius was stated to have been for the third year at Bandar 'Abbas; but these visits had to be interrupted by the winter of 1670-1 owing to insufficiency of numbers of Religious.⁹ Fr. Celsus was a chaplain there in 1678, and others are cited up till 1684.

The working of a mission in Malabar, already mentioned above as an innovation from 1668, had four Carmelites sent out for it in 1676, and in 1679 four others: although entirely separate from the missionary 'province' of Persia, it came to replace those establishments of the Carmelites in India which had together formed the 'Mission of Persia and the Indies'; for Tatta in Sind, which lost its former importance when Europeans ceased to reside there, was abandoned by 1672; the Residence at Diu was closed (for a time) by a rising in 1669, and is hardly mentioned during the rest of the century in letters preserved: while from the end of the period now under review nothing more will be heard of the convent at Goa. Even if the report which reached the vicar provincial in Isfahan in 1689¹⁰ were not accurate—

¹ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 252, 26.3.1671, Rome.

² Fr. John Baptist, 11.9.1678, O.C.D. 238 k.

³ "Graveyard of the Franks", was Fr. Angelus' description, 3.1.1673.

⁴ O.C.D. 238 s, 3.5.1668.

⁵ O.C.D. 237 d, 28.2.1669: He must have been hard in his personal asceticism to complain of the Visitor General, Fr. Francis of Jesus, 'relaxing discipline' by allowing Carmelites to wear linen habits and do without some articles of clothing on account of the climate at Bandar 'Abbas, O.C.D. 236 i, Fr. Angelus, 2.9.1670.

⁶ O.C.D. 236 i, 14.1.1671.

⁷ O.C.D. 238 i, 15.12.1675.

⁸ and ¹⁰ Fr. Elias, 18.6.1689, O.C.D. 237 h.

⁹ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 252, Fr. Valerius.

"ships lately come from Goa bring us the news that all the foreign Fathers have left there
"and retired to Malabar, only Portuguese Fathers remaining"—,

and though Fr. Gaspar Joseph,¹ the Prior of Isfahan, was dispatched at the end of August 1691² with a companion to hold the Congress of the missionaries at Goa, a few years later all connection between that port and the Carmelite Mission of Persia ceased (as may be read in the section of this book dealing with the establishments one by one).

Left insufficient in numbers for the pastoral care of each Residence, short of funds or in actual debt, the Carmelites were sorely tried, in addition, during this reign in endeavours to comply with the 'Instructions' of their Order in respect to (a) the holding triennially of the 'Congress' for the selection of a Procurator to proceed to Rome and take part in the chapter-general of the Order on behalf of the Mission. Reference is first made to this as a new regulation in 1634.³ The Priors of the two Convents of Isfahan and Goa, each with a Companion 'Socius', under the superintendence of the Vicar Provincial or Visitor General had to meet and choose a Procurator and a Substitute, generally from their own number; but the place of meeting, with Isfahan 600 miles from the sea, Shiraz nearly 200, and a sea voyage of 1,000 miles or more to Tatta or Goa meant in those days of slow sailing (and that only during one short season of the year) an absence of many months for some of the delegates, whether they went to Goa, to Kung, to Shiraz for the Congress (e.g. on 31.10.1667 the Vicar Provincial fixed a date for the Congress to be held at Basra, or in certain eventualities at Diu: actually it was held at Kung early in 1669). Such displacements were possible so long as numbers were sufficient in the first half of the century; but the expense of such lengthy journeys, the stopping of work in a mission post fell harder on the Religious from 1660, and many are the complaints: "visitations and congress—things which do nothing but ruin the spiritual and financial condition of the missionaries," as one put it.⁴ After 1691 there is no further allusion to the Prior of Isfahan leaving the Convent to proceed to a rendezvous for such a purpose: the loss of the Convent at Goa presumably made it superfluous. (b) The election of a Prior for the Convent at Isfahan by all conventuals, whether in Isfahan or working in one of the outposts or Residences, Bandar 'Abbas, Basra, Shiraz, similarly became difficult to achieve when the numbers left alive or making the journey dwindled, as in 1670–3, to two Religious only voting. To make the journey from Basra meant perhaps five months' absence. The propriety of such an election being held, and the validity of the acts of those elected were matters which troubled the consciences of and caused unpleasantness between the various Religious.

With all these hardships and disabilities accruing during the first twenty years of Shah Sulaiman it is not surprising that the Carmelite Mission was left at a relatively low ebb: a French Father who, while being the typical Gascon in temperament and no doubt trying in his ways and language, was yet one of the most polished linguists in Persian the Order produced on the evidence of the massive dictionary, Persian, French, Italian, Turkish, which he compiled and had published at Amsterdam in 1684 and by the statements of some of his companions in Persia, as well as from his own assertion that he knew Persian as he did French—Fr. Angelus of S. Joseph—has painted in vivid and perhaps sometimes exaggerated terms the mode of life of the Carmelites in the 1670's: and that may serve to convey to the student how far the life of the missionaries had fallen from the level of 1608–38, for instance:⁵

"If your Reverence knew that at present no Religious would dare show his face there
"without receiving a good flogging at the gate, you would not have taken so much trouble
"to exhort me to keep away from the Court of the Shah. If your Reverence knew that
"Persians in general consider it a point of the religion they practise to treat all Christians
"and those of other religions differing from their own as *nijis*, i.e. unclean; and that for

¹ This Religious, in a letter of 23.7.1691, O.C.D. 236 b, speaks of being occupied on a "history of the mission begun many years before, but interrupted".

² Fr. Elias, 24.9.1691, O.C.D. 238 u.

³ "New orders as to the method of choosing the procurator and substitute to go to the Chapter General," see Fr. Dimas, 31.10.1634.

⁴ Fr. Angelus, 25.3.1669, O.C.D. 238 l.

⁵ Fr. Angelus, O.C.D. 236 i, 1.10.1672.

"that reason we never go out into the streets, nor into the houses of the grandees, with
 "whom we have business, without receiving insults and being called 'dogs'; and that the
 "vilest rascal draws away from us, afraid lest we should touch him, and that they will
 "make an outcry if they feel our breath, or are touched by us, you would not exhort me
 "so strongly to keep in retreat, where we are compelled to remain . . . unless some great
 "and unavoidable need compel us to go into the city, where I never go without feeling
 "like the ox at the butcher's, i.e. with a thousand apprehensions. So that, in a word,
 "reverend Father, for the past three or four years none of the Religious settled in Isfahan
 "has had any *entrée* at the Court,¹ nor in consequence any favourable means for approach-
 "ing the grandees, except those who are already aware that the Religious are 'learned folk'
 "—a factor which the Persians particularly esteem. For all the rest, such as our poverty,
 "the meanness of our clothing, our going barefoot, and other features which in Christendom
 "serve to edify people, here on the contrary make people indignant and shock them. . . .
 "In reality the Muslims cannot stand our penances and austerities, and consider them
 "mere follies (there are more than 10,000 Hindus in Isfahan, and other Indians—faqirs—
 "whose austerities surpass those of all European Religious and are well-nigh incredible)
 ". . . our late Fr. Philip" (i.e. of the Most Holy Trinity) "although he made only a short
 "stay in Persia hit the nail on the head, so to speak, when he said . . . 'In Perside mendicitas
 "'est ignominia'—'in Persia it is a disgrace to beg'."

In the same strain Fr. Angelus observed in a later letter from Isfahan, 3.1.1673:

"We are two here . . . Fr. Ladislas never goes out, because on going through the city
 "one receives nothing but imprecations and insults from the Muslims. . . . As to myself,
 "I sometimes remain whole months without seeing a 'Frank' either outside or inside our
 "House, even in our church and on Sundays we have only our two servants. . . ."

Six years later, 20.3.1679² Fr. Fortunatus put it:

"At present in Persia we follow the life of hermits, not that of missionaries, because when
 "we are in choir there is no opportunity of learning the language and conversing with
 "people. . . ."

On the other hand Fr. Aurelius of S. Augustine asserted:³

"our mission does not consist in running here and there about the town, but we do our
 "duty when there is need. I was twenty months at Shiraz, and never once saw the town,
 "seeing that our Christians are all living near our House. . . ."

Fr. Angelus must have been chided or exhorted in some letter from a Definitor General
 in regard to leaving the convent, for he explained, 8.9.1675:

". . . There could never be introduced greater solitude than there is: for in this convent
 "the Father Prior, for example, has only gone out twice this year, in order to visit some
 "new arrivals. Fr. Aurelius, not knowing the language yet, does not go out once a month.
 "As for myself I go out rather more often, as our Fr. Vicar Provincial charged me with
 "some mission work in Julfa, and besides I do the business outside with the Muslims. . . ."

"As to excursions, we have had three in the past six years of which I know, to which
 "all the Religious in Isfahan, and all the 'Frank' layfolk, French, English, Dutch, etc.,

¹ Yet, writing of July 1669 Fr. Valerius stated:

"Shortly before I arrived in Isfahan, Fr. Jerome had been summoned to the house of 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, the grand
 "Wazir, and first person after the king, to read the Gospel and pray for a sick son of his. . . ." *S.N.R.*, II, p. 252.

² O.C.D. 237 k.

³ 11.5.1678, O.C.D. 241 c.

"come; but then the enjoyment is all for the other people, the more so as we do these on
 "a very meagre fare—a few eggs and a little wine . . ."

and he also emphasized the need of being able to give an account of one's religion, when summoned to do so:

"When I first came to Persia, along with the senior of those now remaining in the Mission
 "I was obliged to appear in a gathering held by the governor of Shiraz. Attacked by the
 "governor himself regarding our belief in the Incarnation he excused himself for not
 "replying, saying that he only understood the speech of the bazars; so that the governor
 "drove him away at once, calling him: 'Khar-i-gada!' (i.e. 'you beggarly ass!'), and saying:
 "'What have you been doing in Persia for so many years?': and so we were forced to leave
 "quicker than at a walk, to the scandal of others and contempt for our mysteries. . . .
 "To confound Persian temerity accomplished persons are needed, for these people are very
 "studious—they have infinite esteem for a Religious who can stand up to them (in
 "argument). . . ."

In yet another letter of 22.12.1675¹ he had criticism on dress:

"I have submitted to your Reverence that bare feet and sandals are points which are
 "no slight obstacle in missionary work, especially among the Muslims:

"(a) it is not only difficult, but even impossible, to go into a room belonging to Persians
 "with bare, ugly, damp, muddy feet, without exciting inevitably indignation and oppro-
 "brium and rebuffs from all present, the more so as the floors of houses are covered
 "with carpets. . . .

"(b) . . . for beards we have adapted ourselves to the habit of the country . . . why
 "then should we not adapt ourselves in a matter where there is need? the postures one
 "must needs adopt in bending down to tie or untie our sandals at every door is far from
 "respectable: and yet Religious habits were adopted for edification! Why not then
 "follow the habit of the country? that was the practice with all those predecessors of
 "ours, such as Fr. Dionysius the late Vicar Provincial, and Fr. Severin . . . none of
 "them ever went to houses of grandees, or Persians of the middle-class, where one had
 "missionary or other business, without having their feet decently covered with stockings
 "of our colours, and black slippers . . . for that there could be little inconvenience, as
 "our churches and reception-rooms are covered with carpets, and we are constantly
 "obliged to bend down to tie on or untie our sandals at the doors. . . ."

A report by the Vicar Provincial to the Praepositus General on 31.8.1675² individually mentions several Religious as unable to learn, or not knowing, the local language: and it provides evidence that of the twelve Fathers named not more than one or two were of the calibre and standard of the Carmelites in the previous half-century, either in talents, missionary spirit, or religious practice—all the more surprising because a number were products of the Seminary in Rome, where both in languages and other qualities they should have been trained. The visitation reports of 1684³ also make clear the deterioration of spirit and customs among the missionaries of that time: poor grounding and formation, laxity, disobedience—"the worst evil in these countries is that nobody does (or says) anything, except for his own convenience".⁴ Not only the standard was lower, but there was at one time neglect by headquarters in Rome to provide for the leadership and government of the forlorn and scattered Religious: witness the following quotations from letters⁵ of 1682 and later:

¹ O.C.D. 236 b.

⁴ Fr. Angelus, 26.10.1684.

² *Idem*, 238 c.

⁵ Fortunatus of Jesus Mary, O.C.D. 237 k

³ *Idem*, 241 a, 29.6.1684, 8.7.1684.

"25.9.1682. . . . we have been for almost three years without a Vicar Provincial, or "Substitute. . . ."

"10.6.1684. . . . still no Vicar Provincial, or Visitor General for many years."

There were Augustinians, Capuchins, Jesuits also in Isfahan: on results of efforts of all combined Carmelites did not hesitate to speak plainly:

"Having been ordered by my superiors to make a report to the Sacr. Congregation de "Propaganda Fide on the state of our mission in Persia and the harvest gathered there," wrote Fr. Felix of S. Antony, 1.7.1673,¹ "I suppose your Eminences there wish to hear "the truth, and do not desire to be deceived with the false and exaggerated accounts, which "greatly transcend the limits of the truth. I shall say then that our Religious . . . keep "the few Catholic Christians there are here well instructed in the Catholic Faith; but as "to the conversion of Muhammadans, save for one now and then and a marvel, there are "no conversions at all, not from any failure on the part of the missionaries, who do their "best, but by the suitable designs of God, who has not yet raised the veil from the eyes "of these poor people. For the space of 26 years approximately that I have been in the "East I have neither heard of any conversion of a Muhammadan, except of one or two "and that very rarely, nor among the Armenians, more than a very few, for they are "obstinate and deceitful.

"The result, which can be said to be effected, is that our Religious live decorously and "edifyingly, which causes the infidels themselves to wonder. . . . But, as there are some "here² who have had some reports printed of the great progress made, the harvest and "conversions, which certain Religious have effected—which are all fables and fictions—"I beg to inform your Most Illustrious Lordship that such false accounts have caused much "scandal and distinct harm to the Faith, and to the authority of ecclesiastical reports; "because, when heretics and schismatics see with their own eyes that here there are such "printed reports full of falsehoods, they say that even ecclesiastical reports are false, and "mock at the Roman Catholic Church. A stop ought to be put to this, and permission to "print not given, nor any credit to any report which be not signed by persons deserving "confidence and authority. . . ."³

Answering the same questionnaire from Basra, another Carmelite, Fr. Jerome, was equally downright:⁴

"With the Muhammadans there is absolutely nothing to be done . . . so long as for "them to embrace the Faith is tantamount to being determined at the same time on being "a martyr (a grace permitted to few at this time), or else means having to quit the homeland "and to trust oneself to chance in worldly matters—a thing all the more difficult, as the "people here are engulfed in worldly pleasures, and accustomed to seek nothing else than "the profits of the world. . . ."

* * * * *

* * * *

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 449, p. 86.

² i.e. Members of other Orders working in Persia—possibly the accounts by Père Machault and Alexandre de Rhodes, *S.J.*, in view of the glowing tributes to results.

³ On this the instructions were issued in the secretariat of the Sacr. Cong.: "Let written orders be given sent out that "printing is prohibited, and asking for (the production of) reports issued without the permission of the Sacr. Congregation."

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 449, pp. 211-4, 10.8.1673.

By contrast the activity of the Carmelites beginning in the last ten years of the reign of Shah Sulaiman attracts attention: it was largely due to the resolute leadership of one man, Fr. Elias of S. Albert, a Walloon from Mons; it centred round a determination on his part that the Carmelites should be established in Julfa—everything else in the area covered by the Mission was subordinated to that: it brought on a clash with the schismatic Armenians, which was only the first engagement in a protracted battle.

So much in this recital of the vicissitudes of this Mission in Persia, that is to say Isfahan and Julfa in particular, is taken up—and increasingly so in the eighteenth century—by the antagonism of Armenian schismatic clergy to missionaries from Europe persuading the people, and exhorting the spiritual leaders to ask for union with Rome and make submission to the Holy See, that the reader may well be puzzled regarding the reasons for such insistence on the one hand and such resistance on the other, and may welcome an account here, as concise as possible, of what the Armenian Church had been before A.D. 1600 and the arrival of the Carmelites. It is not straightforward, but tangled history full of apparent contradictions; and that this account may be the more authoritative the following excerpts are taken from the *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, vol. IV, 'commenced under the direction of Mgr (now Cardinal) Baudrillart, Paris, Librairie Letouzey, 1930'.

Greater Armenia was, at the period of its widest extent, bounded by the river Kur on the north, the Caspian Sea on the east, Mesopotamia on the south, the Euphrates separated it on the west from Lesser Armenia. Alexander the Great conquered it in his campaigns before 336 B.C.: Artaxias, a governor left by Antiochus, is said to have founded Artaxata, the capital of northern Armenia *cnc.* 190 B.C.: his descendant Tigranes II, a vassal of the Parthian kings, conquered Lesser Armenia, and Syria up to Mardin. There were wars with the Romans in the period of Pompey and Antony, and again in the second century after Christ, the town of Artaxata being destroyed about A.D. 180 and a new capital, Vagharchapat chosen: Echmiadzin was founded near its ruins. The Armenian king Tiridates III with the help of the Romans in A.D. 296 regained the throne, defeating the Sasanian monarch, Narses: the protectorate of the Roman Empire over the provinces between the Tigris and Lake Van was recognized.

As to the adoption of Christianity by the Armenians, there is the evidence of the ecclesiastical historian, Eusebius, that in 312 the Armenians refused to abjure it, when soldiers were sent by the emperor Maximin: while S. Athanasius in the *Incarnatio Verbi* in 318 wrote that 'it was the triumph of Christ to have submitted to his laws impenetrable countries such as Armenia whose inhabitants were always at war'; but it is with S. Gregory the Illuminator the proto-saint of the Armenians, son of an Arsacid satrap, taken to Caesarea and baptized that the active history of religion opens. After Tiridates III, 278–87, had recovered the throne Gregory was taken to Caesarea and received consecration from S. Leontius about A.D. 294, according to the history of Sozomen: and thenceforward Armenia depended on Caesarea, the see of S. Basil the Great (and S. Basil in his writings discourses on the consecration of Armenian bishops). The first ecclesiastical centre, where S. Gregory resided, was at Astishat west of Mush, not at Echmiadzin, the political capital. His son, Aristakes, took part in the Council of Nicaea, A.D. 325, and signed the decree: the Athanasian Creed was adopted in Armenia from the sixth century. However in 374 a puppet king broke with Caesarea and the Western Church, as well as severing friendly terms with the Romans. A division of regions between Theodosius the Great and Shapur III, the Sasanian king of Persia (384–9), gave to Shapur more than two-thirds of Armenia. Persecuted by the Sasanian Yazdigird I, A.D. 399–420, the Armenians revolted with the help of the emperor Theodosius II and obtained from Bahram (A.D. 420–3) a little more tolerance. In 405 Mesrop had stabilized the Armenian alphabet of 36 letters. When peace was made between Theodosius II and the Persians, Sahak sent Mesrop to Constantinople, where he was appointed 'Grand Vartapet', given equal authority with the Archbishop of Caesarea, and authorized to open schools, which the Metropolitan of Caesarea had not allowed. From that time the jurisdiction of Constantinople replaced that of Caesarea for the Armenian Church. Nationalist suspicion, and hostility towards Rome caused the Sasanian masters of the country to prevent the Armenian bishops from attending

the Council of Ephesus in A.D. 431. The adherents of Nestorius tried to spread their doctrines and writings in Armenia, but the bishops were put on their guard: and at a synod at Astishat in A.D. 435 the Armenian Fathers acclaimed Jesus as Son of God, Mary the Theotokos. Under the yoke of Persia the Armenians were led away into breaking their bonds of religious solidarity with the Greeks. The Council of Chalcedon was held with Great Armenia fighting against Mazdaism; they called in vain for help on the emperor Marcian: and the decrees of that Council were never properly understood, for the Armenian clergy were given to suspect that they upset and were opposed to those of the Council of Ephesus to which they held firmly, i.e. while acknowledging the unity of the person of Christ, they were poorly instructed in the concepts of 'nature', 'person', and 'hypostatic union'. The translation into Armenian of Pope Leo the Great's letter to the patriarch Flavian had not rendered the terms properly, but given them a Nestorian colour (anathema to the Armenians): then the emperor Zeno, when the Armenians were about to join him in alliance against the Persians, published the *Henotikon*: finally the emperor Anastasius, who imposed on the Persians in A.D. 506 a treaty favourable to the Armenians, patronized monophysism. During the reign of the emperor Maurice, who received from the Sasanian king Khusru Parwiz (590-628) that part of Armenia west of the river Azar, twenty-one bishops of that region took part in the synod of Constantinople; but the Katholikos, being at Dvin to the east of the river, the emperor installed a new Katholikos and exiled many Armenians to Thrace. The Georgians and Iberians broke away from the Armenians at this time, and accepted the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon.

According as political conditions varied there was, alternatively, union and rupture between the Armenians and the Greeks. The emperor Justinian II carried away as a hostage to Constantinople in 690 the Katholikos Sahak III: and in 692 at the Council of Trullo the Greeks reproached the Armenians for using wine alone in the Holy Sacrifice, and also for sacrificing animals, while in A.D. 726 at the synod of Melazgird the Katholikos John directed wine unmixed with water to be used and separated from allegiance to Chalcedon. After an earthquake in 893 the Katholikos removed his residence from Dvin to Vagharchapat, but later the heads of the Armenian Church went to the district of Van, and fixed it at Aghthamar on an island in the middle of lake Van. The Katholikos Vahan, consecrated at Ani, 967-70, made public his allegiance to the Council of Chalcedon, introduced the Greek ikons into his patriarchal church and spread the doctrine of the two natures of Christ; but a synod, meeting in opposition to his policy, deprived him of office. Under the Katholikos Katchik, who was anti-Chalcedonist, a Metropolitan and 21 Greek bishops were installed in the Armenian provinces of the Greek empire, while the Armenians were exasperated by attacks of an Archbishop of Caesarea on Armenian doctrine.

Once more the residence of the Katholikos was transferred to Ani under Sarkis I, and a cathedral built (A.D. 990-1020). Gregory III again changed his abode, to Drzuq a fortress in the midst of lake Karpert: he was invited to the Latin synod of Antioch, which had as president the papal legate, Alberic. The chronicler, Guillaume de Tyr, relates that before the assembly the Katholikos made his profession of faith, which, differing in numerous points from that of the Fathers, he promised to amend: and Pope Innocent III encouraged his goodwill by a kindly Brief and sending him the pallium. Later, in the time of Eugenius III, the Katholikos, harassed by the Greeks, sent envoys to assure the Pope that he was ready to conform with the Roman practice regarding the mixing of water and wine for Mass. Relations with Rome were greatly forwarded by the arrival of the Crusaders in northern Syria; while they besieged Antioch they were re-victualled to an extent by the mountain chieftains of the Taurus who then founded the principality of Armenian Cilicia. Beatrix, wife of Jocelyn, made over the fortress of Hromela (1147-51) to the Katholikos who sought an opportunity to put himself under the protection of the Crusaders and in greater security than at Drzuq. (Ani was sacked in 1239.) The Katholikos Gregory IV remained in communion with the Syrian church. At the Council of Hromela (1179) with 33 archbishops, bishops or Vartapets the Armenians accepted the formula of two natures in Christ, pressed by the Greeks, but in return they demanded of the latter the use of azyme (unleavened) bread according to the true tradition,

and also that of the Roman Church. On Gregory IV sending to lay certain complaints before Pope Lucius III, this pope urged him to reform some of the Armenian practices, e.g. the use of wine undiluted in the chalice, and as a sign of his regard sent him the pallium, a ring and a mitre.

Profiting by disorders in 1311 Sarkis, the Armenian archbishop of Jerusalem, elevated his see into an independent patriarchate under the protection of the Sultan of Egypt, and this gave rise to another division of ecclesiastical authority among the Armenians.

During the period of the Crusades, and for some two centuries afterwards, two tendencies are to be observed: on the one hand, with Muhammadan pressure encircling Armenia and the greater need of closer relations with Pope and Christendom, many Armenians with no spirit for war, and set on religious autonomy, opposed the doctrinal and liturgic reforms required by Rome and the alliances of the Armenian princes with the Crusaders: on the other hand the most zealous partisans of submission to the Roman Church themselves followed and exaggerated a large number of divergencies of rite and attacked the official church of Armenian Cilicia. The Pope pressed for a synod: the Armenian monk, Daniel, reader in theology at Sis, was then sent to the Pope at Avignon to justify the official dogmas of the Armenian Church: and his exposition was found satisfactory in some points, not in a number of others. The new king, Guy de Lusignan, did his best to bring about changes which would satisfy the Roman See, but he was assassinated by Armenians who reproached him for being a fervent Catholic and for defending his kingdom of Armenia.

After the Synod of Sis in 1345, when pressure was brought by the Pope for reform, there was a slackening of the bonds of union—28 Armenian archbishops and bishops tried to show that the Armenian Church was in accord with Rome in matters of faith and discipline; but the Katholikos Mesrop in 1361 summoned a new synod at Cis, which suppressed the mixing of water with wine in the Chalice. (In 1356 Pope Innocent IV approved the constitution and rule of the religious community which settled in the district of Nakhchiwan, often mentioned in this work, near Erivan, Echmiadzin and Mt. Ararat with the object of providing a link of 'union' between the Armenians and Rome—the Frères Uniteurs: their members were responsible for the translation into Armenian of many Latin works.) Leo VI (Leon de Lusignan), the last king of Armenian Cilicia, crowned 1374, had to surrender to the Muslims, was ransomed and died in France, 1393.

Invited to the Council of Florence by Eugenius IV the Katholikos Constantine VI delegated full powers to the Bishop of Aleppo and certain Vartapets and, an accord having been reached with the Greeks in July 1439, in public session, 22.11.1439, and in the presence of the Pope the Armenians accepted not only the dogmatic truths already subscribed by the Greeks, but also all the disciplinary constitutions. The delegates translated into Armenian the act of union. Opposition to the Council and to its settlement soon came from the monks in eastern Armenia: there were recriminations against the Katholikos: four bishops of Cilicia complained of the discredit of the see of Sis for the past 150 years and urged a return to Echmiadzin under the shadow of Mt. Ararat, where S. Gregory the Illuminator had shed the lustre of his name. The Katholikos Gregory IX in vain excommunicated those who called on him to transfer from Cilicia to Echmiadzin, for the opposition—some 17 bishops and hundreds of priests and laymen—gathered in synod at Echmiadzin and revived that centre of authority by electing as anti-Katholikos a monk, Kiriakos, who was at once recognized by another twelve bishops, but deposed by his own partisans within two years. The Katholikos of Sis remained, a number of them, in union with Rome; in 1560-84, for instance, Khatchatur of Zaitun renewed the tradition.

Yet another division of authority is to be recorded from 1461 when the Sultan Muhammad IV after conquering Constantinople recognized as patriarch there the Armenian bishop of Brusa, Joachim (1461-78), and gave him jurisdiction over all monophysites: these patriarchs were puppets of the Turkish government for the most part and of the participation of laymen in the committees of election to the office.

The position, therefore, became:

At Aghthamar (lake Van) there was an Armenian Katholikos—supreme head—from 1113 down to 1895; since, only vicars.

At Sis (Cilicia) there was an Armenian Katholikos—supreme head, 1447–1904.

At Echmiadzin, there has been an Armenian Katholikos—supreme head—from 1441 to present times.

At Jerusalem, there has been an Armenian patriarch from 1311 till present times.

At Constantinople, there has been an Armenian patriarch from 1461 till recent times; before 1915 his administrative authority extending over 63 dioceses, his spiritual jurisdiction over 45 only, being limited by those of Aghthamar and Sis;

in each case, except perhaps the last, representing revolts from the authority of a superior, these centres of ecclesiastical jurisdiction are widely separated; the earlier sites—Astachat, Echmiadzin, Vagharchapat, Dvin, Ani—were all in proximity to one another in Greater Armenia, lying around Erivan.

It will be realized that the re-creation from 1441 of the supreme see at Echmiadzin, which alone of the divided authorities was to affect the Armenians of Persia and their relations with the Latin missionaries, intrinsically represented a revolt against Rome and against such union as was concretely demonstrated by the Council of Florence: the Katholikos and his leading ecclesiastics were removing themselves as far as might be geographically from the influence of Rome and, as in Parthian and Sasanian times, putting themselves voluntarily under the hegemony of the alien (and now Muslim) autocrats of Persia, which would serve to raise a wall of nationalist Persian prejudice and hostility against Roman emissaries obtaining the allegiance of their Armenian subjects—exactly the position in which the unfortunate early Persian Church had involuntarily and unwillingly been placed. None the less, the tradition of the first centuries counted at times and the genius of the Armenian character for changeability and instability of policy protruded itself even in the subsequent history of the heads of Echmiadzin. In 1548–50 Stephen V made an act of submission at Rome itself to Pope Paul III: and his successor, Michael, sent to Pope Pius IV envoys who promised in the name of the Katholikos to amend their dogmas and discipline as required by the Pope (but whenever freed from Muslim domination!). The Pope supported the foundation of an Armenian printing press in Rome: S. Pius V gave the Armenians the church of Sta Maria Aegyptiaca.

The attitude of the Katholikos who followed—David IV (of Vagharchapat), 1587–1629, and his coadjutor and rival, Melchisedech, 1593–1628: of Moses III, 1629–32: Philip (of Aghbak), 1633–55: and of James IV¹ (Hacop IV of Julfa), 1655–80 and his rival and anti-patriarch, Eleazar² (of Aintab, 1663–82 and 1682–91) has already been noted in preceding

¹ The Nuncio at Venice, 6.8.1678 (*S.R.*, vol. 470, p. 161) informed the Sacr. Cong. of the arrival and visit to him of the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, who came from Constantinople via Spalato, and informed the Nuncio of the impending arrival via Moscow of the Patriarch of Armenia, with 25 bishops, to lay himself at the feet of the Pope: and Mgr François Picquet, 26.9.1680 (*S.R.*, vol. 481, pp. 5–21) wrote that

“on 13.8.1680 the Patriarch James (Hacop) of Greater Armenia, an old man of 70, who for so long past wanted to go to Rome, died at Constantinople: before his death he made a profession of the Catholic Faith.”

The *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géogr. Ecclésiast.* states that the profession of Faith was made in the presence of the Vicar Apostolic at Constantinople (Archbishop of Cyzicus) and of the superior of the Jesuits. Three weeks after his death the French ambassador de Guilleragues forwarded it to the king of France. His tomb in the cemetery at Pera was venerated.

² Of the Katholikos Eleazar Bishop Picquet makes mention in letters of 23.3.1683 (*S.N.R.*, I, p. 431), that he is ‘waiting for the patriarch Eleazar to come from Echmiadzin, as he had inveigled there and there imprisoned Mgr Vartan, a Catholic ‘helping the Capuchins in Georgia’: and, secondly (*S.R.*, vol. 490, p. 252 *et seq.*) from Isfahan, speaking of the Armenian Uniate, Bishop Picquet wrote:

“But they are always in some trepidation, particularly now that there is expected (at Isfahan) the patriarch Eleazar, who wished to go to Rome, apparently with all goodwill, but actually I do not know, since he has changed his mind, and sent back to me the letters for which he asked me. He is coming, so it is said, in great pomp, and with a numerous following. . . .”

Of this Katholikos, and with particular reference to the case of Mgr Vartan, Pope Innocent XI made complaint to Shah Sulaiman in a Brief of 24.7.1683 (*Arch. Vat. Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 75, p. 179, given in the Appendix of Latin Briefs), which by its directness is in great contrast to the verbiage of some Briefs already cited:

“Pope Innocent XI to the illustrious and most puissant king of the Persians. Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of the Divine grace. News has been brought to Us that Eleazar, patriarch of the Armenians,

reigns in connection with the position as related by the Carmelite correspondence. Nahapiet I (of Edessa, Katholikos, 1691–1705, in succession to Eleazar who became recognized patriarch 1682–91) displayed a constant goodwill towards the Roman Church. He caused the anathemas against the Council of Chalcedon, customary hitherto, to be omitted from the Armenian ordinal. But, while proclaiming Pope Innocent XII ‘Bishop of Bishops, Father of all Christian nations, ‘especially the Armenian’, he did not make publicly a profession of Faith admissible as Catholic: for he feared to be displaced and overthrown by the adversaries of union with Rome at that period, the vartapets Stephen and Alexander, in regard to whom first-hand witness will be given by the Carmelites in this and the following chapter.

It remains only for the reader to have in mind some of the differences of dogma and discipline of the Gregorian, i.e. schismatic Armenians:

- (1) Though their principal creed is almost identical with that of S. Athanasius, they have adopted another, a sort of paraphrase accentuated in parts, since the 14th century: and they reject the expression ‘two natures in the one person of Jesus Christ’ while admitting implicitly this doctrine.

They reject also

- (2) the addition to the Nicæan Creed of the ‘Filioque’.
- (3) the particular judgment at death,
- (4) the positive punishments of purgatory,
- (5) the beatific vision for the soul free of all stain on leaving the body,
- (6) the doctrine of indulgences,
- (7) and in particular the real supremacy and infallibility of the Pope.

There have been schismatic prelates, influenced by Protestant views, who also do not admit seven sacraments as dogmatic and in practice recognize only baptism and the Eucharist, rejecting altogether transubstantiation and extreme unction; but they are in disagreement with most of the non-Catholic Vartapets and the practice of their own church on that point. As to their discipline, baptism with the Gregorians is usually by immersion but can be by infusion: it is followed by confirmation, conferred by a simple priest. Communion is in the two kinds, azyme (unleavened) bread being used as with the Catholics; but they do not mix water with the wine before consecration: they reserve pieces of hosts for the communion of the sick: episcopal orders are conferred by the Katholikos alone: the cult of images has always existed in the Armenian Church. Interference of the laity in the doctrinal and administrative offices of the vartapets and patriarchs has been frequent through the centuries: numerous are the forced, sometimes violent depositions effected by lay instrumentality—it is a blot on their history.

It is to the point here to note what Pope Paul V, in his Brief of 28.4.1612 (4th Kalends of May), in kindly but insistent fashion explained to Melchisedech, then patriarch, were grave errors in the Armenian rite requiring alteration to make this conform with the practice and tenets of the universal Church, Eastern as well as Western. The Armenian patriarch had sent Zachariah, a “preacher” or Vartapet, to Rome in that year or 1611. The following

“living at Echmiadzin, a town in Your widespread kingdom, giving way to the hatred with which he most bitterly pursues
 “all Armenians who accede to union with the Roman Church, taking advantage of the passage through there made last
 “December by Our venerable brother Vartan Ohanian, lately deputed coadjutor to the Armenian archbishop in union
 “with this Holy See residing at Leopoli, had forcibly detained him, loaded him with many insults and thrust him into a
 “dungeon, being, as is bruited, of a mind to deliver him over to death, or at the least to deprive him of the light of his
 “eyes. But, since it regards Us first and foremost to help with all possible resources and aid those who embrace the
 “Catholic religion, We pressingly beg of the fairness and equity of Your Highness well known and very celebrated in
 “the whole world, to which a most grievous affront and violence has been done by the said Armenian patriarch in
 “arresting the aforesaid Vartan, that You command him to be restored to his former freedom and make known to all
 “that the safety of innocent persons weighs greatly with You. By such fine action even firmer will You bind to Yourself
 “Our goodwill, well disposed towards You on account of Your gifts which are outstanding and worthy of a very great
 “king, for whose Sublimity We earnestly pray from God unbroken happiness of success and also the perfect light of the
 “true Faith.

“Given at Rome at S. Mary Major under the Fisherman’s ring 24th July 1683, in the 7th year of Our Pontificate.”

extracts are translated: the Latin will be found in the Appendix of Latin Briefs (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 7, p. 142 (151), No. 361):

"To Our venerable brother Melchisedech, Patriarch of Armenia. . . . So with the "greatest pleasure We have recommended you and the whole Armenian people very "earnestly to the most puissant king of the Persians, Shah 'Abbas, as Our beloved son "Zachariah the 'preacher' intimated to Us that you desired. . . .

"We . . . have accepted with very affectionate feelings the very handsome gift offered "to Us in your name by Our beloved son Zachariah the 'preacher', through whom We too "send your fraternity a particle of the most sacred wood of the most holy Cross of our "Lord, enclosed in a tiny golden cross, which We wished that you should have from Us "in place of the crown ascribed to Our head by your letter. From him also you will "receive certain priestly vestments for the Divine mysteries and other sacred rites to be "performed—given to You by Us as a gift from the hallowings of S. Peter,¹ so that your "love for the most blessed Prince of the Apostles may ever increase the more. . . .

" . . . But of those errors, when by Our instructions all were expounded to the said "Zachariah, your 'preacher', he frankly confessed that two only are to be found in your "Church: he altogether denied" (the existence of) "the others. The first is that you do "not mix water with the wine in the sacred chalice contrary to the rite and custom of all "the Western and Eastern churches. The holy Fathers undoubtedly held that a little water "is to be mixed with the wine in the oblation of the tremendous sacrifice, because the "Lord consecrated wine mixed with water to be distributed by his disciples, as is affirmed "by S. James the Apostle in the liturgy Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Cyprian and Basil, and "because this is particularly appropriate to the representation of the passion of the Lord. "For the Blessed Alexander, the fifth after Blessed Peter, says:² 'In the oblations which "are offered to the Lord during the solemnities of the Masses let only bread and wine "mixed with water be offered for the sacrifice. For there ought not to be offered in the "chalice of the Lord either wine alone or water alone, but both mixed, because it is read "that both, that is blood and water, have flowed from the side of Christ'. And also "because it is appropriate to signify the effect of this sacrament, which is the union of the "Christian people to Christ. For water signifies the people according to that in the Apoca- "lypse—"Many waters, many peoples'. And Julius, the second Pope after Blessed Silvester, "says:³ 'According to the precept of the canons the chalice of the Lord ought to be offered "mixed of wine and water, because we see the people understood in the water, while in "wine the blood of Christ to be shown. Therefore, when in the chalice wine and water "is mixed, the people is made one with Christ and the community of the faithful is coupled "and joined to Him in whom it believes'. Therefore, venerable brother, it is necessary "for you to correct this error: for, having been admonished by Us, unless you conform "yourself to the Universal Church by mixing water with the wine in the consecration, "you would sin grievously. So in no wise shall you permit in the Church of the Armenians "that the wine be offered any more without water in the sacred mystery.

"The second error, and that was graver, is that to the sacred hymn of the Trisagion" (i.e. the "Holy, Holy, Holy" of the Preface of the Mass) "you add 'WHO WAS CRUCIFIED'; "on account of which addition Peter the Fuller, bishop of Antioch, was condemned synodi- "cally everywhere, at Rome and Constantinople, because the impious sayings of all the "heretics and the errors of the heathen in respect to a multiplicity of gods are contained in "it, as clearly Pope Felix and Acacius Patriarch of Constantinople declared in their epistles,

¹ Literally "from the 'blessings' (or hallowings) of S. Peter," i.e. having been hallowed by being placed at the 'Confessio' or in contact with the chains of S. Peter. The *Theaurus Linguae Latinae* by Teubner of Leipzig gives under "Benedictio":

"(b) super res—plerumque corporeas (2) Consecratio, sanctificatio per res benedictas, whence (3) transferred in ipsa "re benedicta, vel benedicenda," citing S. Gregory the Great, *Epist.*, 7.33, 10.12 and 11.1: "transmisimus vobis de "benedictionibus Sancti Petri Apostoli cucullam et tunicam": and again 8.33: "transmisimus in Beati Petri Apostoli "benedictione crucem parvulam cui de catenis ejus beneficia sunt inserta. . . ."

² S. Alexander I, Pope 121–32.

³ Julius I, Pope 341–52.

"written to Peter himself. The origin of this hymn, as is held from these epistles and from "other ecclesiastical writers, was this: The imperial city" (i.e. Byzantium) "was being "shaken by continual earthquakes, so that Theodosius the Emperor and Proclus the "Patriarch together with the whole population were remaining outside the City, "because there was a fear of the collapse of the buildings, and occupied unceasingly with "prayers to God. On a certain day, when the earth began to be shaken more violently and "on that account the clergy and people were engaged in offering up litanies with a profuse "shedding of tears, suddenly in the sight of all and by some Divine power a small boy was "taken up into the heaven, and then, returned to earth, he announced to the Patriarch and "the Emperor and the whole multitude earnestly imploring the Divine pity that he had "heard the Angels singing after this manner: 'Sanctus Deus, Sanctus Fortis, Sanctus " 'Immortalis' " (see the words used in the Improperia during the adoration of the Cross on Good Friday), " 'have mercy on us'. When at the bidding of the Patriarch the people "sang all together these words, immediately the earthquake ceased. As therefore there is no "mention made in this hymn of the human nature assumed by the Divine Word, so it is "wholly sung by the Church in praise of the Divinity of the Three Persons: nor can any "mention of the Cross be made in it, lest it be inferred that the Divinity is passible" (e.g. suffered on the Cross) "even if, as not less craftily than impiously Peter of Antioch thought "to renew again privily the heresy of Eutyches which had been condemned, it should be "said that one only of the Most Holy Trinity was crucified. For this reason the holy Fathers "all the more refuted the error of Peter, that he would so explain it. . . . All this the holy "Fathers deduced from the detestable addition made by the impious Peter of Antioch to the "Trisagion . . . and they decreed that that addition 'QUI CRUCIFIXUS ES' was altogether "to be removed from the Trisagion. . . ."

On 28.5.1615 (5th Kalends of June: *vide* Arm. XLV, vol. 10, p. 115, No. 352) another long Brief was addressed by Pope Paul to the patriarch Melchisedech: the Pope expressed anxiety at not having received an answer from the patriarch to his Brief of 28.4.1612: again he urged on him abandonment of heretical uses such as those detailed above: and there was a separate Brief to Zachariah the Vartapet addressed to Constantinople. Pope Gregory XV received in his turn a letter from the patriarch Melchisedech by the hand of John, archpresbyter of the churches at Julfa, and on 23.2.1623 (see Arm. XLV, vol. 21, p. 8) replied to Melchisedech

" . . . For since you tender Us obedience, even with such a dutiful deference and "compliant spirit, and together with all your people invoke the eternal Pontiff and Prince "of the Apostles in the Roman See, you furnish Us with no light grounds for gladness":

and with the Apostolic benediction embracing the *Catholic* Armenians Pope Gregory bids him get rid of errors as instructed.

Fr. Elias of S. Albert, then, Prior of the Convent at Isfahan from 1682, Vicar Provincial from 1687, with an intensity never attained by his predecessors or his successors gave his main work to the reconciling to the Holy See of the Gregorian, or schismatic Armenians of Julfa: and in this he did not shrink from its logical sequel—excitement of bitter resentment and opposition from the schismatic clergy. Already in 1681 one letter¹ speaks of:

"the Armenians of Julfa (who) do not cease to persecute our Catholics. . . . The bishop "named Stephen has prohibited marriages between 'Franks' and Armenians. . . ."

and on 30.1.1682 Fr. Elias addressed the Cardinals of the Sacr. Cong. de Propaganda Fide on the same subject:²

¹ Fr. Fortunatus, 25.9.1681, O.C.D. 237 k.

² S.R., vol. 488.

"... Already on several occasions I had written to your Eminence how in this town of Julfa, with the persecution pursued by the schismatics against the Catholics, with the excommunications fulminated against the latter and those consorting with them, with marriages prohibited between them, engagements already contracted with Catholics broken off and many other acts of violence on the part of both the secular and ecclesiastical authority, there still shines a more abundant hope of spreading orthodox faith: and how I had brought out a tract entitled 'Paranetic Letters' to induce them to embrace truth and charity. I also informed you how certain leading men of this Armenian community—five brothers of the distinguished family of Sarrat¹—had banded together against the insolence of the Vartapets and in particular of Stephen their suffragan bishop of Julfa, and renounced the schismatic communion and had summoned from Tabriz to direct a Catholic institution for their very extensive dependents the reverend Basil,² an Armenian doctor in theology, formerly a student in the Urban Seminary at Rome, and what opposition and trials with him they had to surmount on this account, the case being taken before the Muhammadan judge, in whose presence they confounded their adversaries and signally defeated them. . . .

"At the beginning of this month"³ (i.e. January 1682) "I came to live at Julfa and, joining the reverend Basil not only in spirit and counsel, but in my habitation also, in order that I might the more easily learn the Armenian grammar in which he is very skilled, and that I might assist his truly apostolic work, for which he cares not whether men hate him, persecute and say all sorts of evil against him, by virtue of his intrepid confession and preaching of the Catholic faith. For this he left Rome in the year 1670 and, having suffered almost continuously persecution in the East, came to Isfahan, where his very patrons, who summoned him hither, are suffering persecution.

"On the sixteenth of this month, since according to the old Calendar the Armenians

¹ Also called in his letter of 14.7.1683, "Sons of Sarrat and of Shariman" (italicé, Scerimani or Cerimani, in the correspondence).

² To this individual there are numerous references in the archives (a) on 30.11.1668 Basil, Armenian priest, writes from Leghorn to the Sacr. Cong. (b) On 10.9.1670 (S.R., vol. 424, p. 12) the priest Barsagh, i.e. Basil, in Rome asks permission of the Sacr. Cong. to hear confessions of Armenians and Chaldaeans. (c) 1671 (S.R., vol. 427), "Basil Barsagh and John Hagop serve the Sacr. Cong. as interpreters in Armenian." (d) 26.2.1674 A minute in the Sacr. Cong. to Card. Sforza regarding "Basil, formerly a student in this College . . . a man of the greatest competence and great utility to the Catholic religion. . . ." (e) 12.7.1682 (S.R., vol. 487, p. 502), Bishop Picquet wrote of "Parsieg the vartapet, who was at Rome in my time, is now (spiritual) director of the house of the Sarratis. . . . Don Basil the Armenian came back from the Urban College in 1670, and since then had been in Constantinople, Erzerum, Tiflis and Tabriz."

³ Another letter written a year and a half later, 14.7.1683 (O.C.D. 237 h), of Fr. Elias, though giving substantially the same story, contains a number of details of interest, e.g.:

"Five brothers, sons of Sarrat and Shariman, the richest merchants of Julfa, all having houses and families very full of sons, daughters, servants and employees, so that in apportioning the tribute and other taxes on the people of Julfa they had to pay 10 per cent, although now by privilege exempted from paying tribute . . . who had sent for a Catholic doctor from Tabriz, pressed me hard to join him, in order that I might learn the Armenian language with him, and aid him in teaching their children and instructing all their families on Catholic principles, in a house which they gave us. I did not neglect such a fine opportunity, and with God's grace assisting our joint labours we made a chapel where he celebrates according to the Armenian rite (he had reformed the errors of the schismatic rite and introduced the observances of the Catholic), while I celebrated according to the Latin rite. [N.B.—Of Fr. Elias' proficiency in Armenian Bishop Picquet wrote 25.3.1683 (S.R., vol. 490, p. 252 *et seq.*) after his arrival in Isfahan: "There is a Discalced Carmelite Fr. Elias, who knows a little Armenian; but he is in the middle of the City: he is active and does what he can with the Catholic family already mentioned": and, as to the value of "reform of errors," Bishop Pidou, who presumably possessed a good knowledge of Armenian, stated, 22.9.1691 (S.N.R., II): ". . . Since my arrival I have found many errors in the Catholic Armenian church, left to us by the ignorance of the late Armenian doctor Barsagh, i.e. Basil. . . ."]

"... A very severe persecution was stirred up against them" (the Sharimans) "on account of this charitable work . . . of which they overcame, although not without some monetary losses. What they felt the most heavily in all their adversities was the loss of a daughter of Khwajeh Markar, the second of the five brothers, whom the king carried off together with another 26 women and girls on the Armenian feast of the Epiphany last past. They attributed it to the malice and diabolical policy of the Kalantar of Julfa who, enraged at being unable to get the upper hand, and at always remaining with his schismatic party defeated by our Catholics, bethought himself to cause it in part to collapse in a general public ruin by arranging that exhibition of all the women of Julfa, in the course of which he separated and pointed out to the king those might please him the most. This Kalantar—an Armenian Christian himself!—did his best too to compel these gentlemen (i.e. the Sarratis) to become Muhammadans by accusing them of having changed their religion in making themselves 'Franks', as they term European Christians . . . although in order not to give rise to any pretexts they might devise about this name of 'Frank', I was obliged to withdraw from Julfa for some time. . . ."

"were celebrating the Epiphany, we also kept the Feast, there being present besides those of the household a numerous gathering from outside, when, as if to make a declaration of their Catholic Faith, our patrons" (i.e. the Sharimans) "decided that the name of the Sovereign Pontiff should be proclaimed during the Mass at that part of the Canon where there is said by the priest and sung by the choir (the words): 'per Eucharistiam concede charitatem, confirmationem, desiderabilem pacem universo mundo, Sanctae Ecclesiae omnibusque orthodoxis episcopis', by adding: 'in primis Archipatriarchae et omnium Christianorum Pontifici Innocentio XI Papae Romano', etc.

"From the devotion for the Pope's name increasing it seemed proper that it should be inserted in the Divine Office, which is chanted in the hall of the house assigned to us each morning and evening, where there are present both for the prayers as at the reading about 12 boys and almost as many men, who are daily instructed both in letters and Christian doctrine, as well as in the knowledge how to sing the Scriptures especially the Psalms, besides a plentiful gathering of infants and women who collect at fixed times both at Mass and the Office, as also at a meeting and discourse held once a week.

"The envy of the schismatics could not brook such progress in Catholicism, and first they promulgated against the priest Basil an excommunication, which they claimed to have received from Echmiadzin and then, having stirred up the whole people of Julfa against our patrons,—vartapets, presbyters, traders, etc., making a tumult among the people—the Kalantar (or prefect of this town) being the leader, for the second time they flocked to the magistrate of the Muhammadans on the 21st of this month, urging that Fr. Basil should be expelled. For more than five hours this matter was debated with various arguments, the five Sarrati brothers valiantly refuting the accusation. 'Tolle, tolle!' clamabant schismatici, 'perturbatorem hunc publicae quietis qui fidem nostram destruit'. 'Perperam,' respondebant nostri, 'adversus doctorem sapientissimum comoventur ignari, qui veram inter nos fidem extruit.' ('Away, away with this disturber of the public peace who has destroyed our religion,' clamoured the schismatics. 'Wrongly those ignorant people are stirred up against the very learned teacher, who has built up the true religion among us,' replied our partisans.)"

Here the letter goes into theological disputes that took place at the time over S. Cyril and the anathematizing of Pope S. Leo:

"In conclusion Aqa Zaman, the Muslim magistrate, persuaded the parties to make peace, to which our patrons agreed as far as the Kalantar and a certain Khwajeh Johannes were concerned, but not with the vartapets as long as Stephen the arch-mover of this tumult should be their head. . . . Our patrons are constantly working—they are worth 70,000 Tumans, i.e. more than one million scudi, and are well in favour at the Court. . . . One difficulty, however, confronts them—the prohibition of marriage: unless their children form unions in the second degree of consanguinity, they are unable to find anyone of a condition in life equal to themselves. . . . It would be a great boon, were a dispensation for this granted. . . ."

The letter from the Emperor to Shah Sulaiman, brought by the Visitor General, Fr. Agnellus, to Isfahan, as already mentioned, was delivered at the Court on 9.8.1683: and later the Prior, Fr. Elias, returning to seek an answer, obtained that *raqam* (i.e. rescript) of which a translation has already been given, purporting to permit the Carmelites to establish themselves anywhere in the Shah's realm, without hindrance. Armed with this *raqam*, Fr. Elias reopened the house at Julfa, given by the Shariman brothers for him to reside with the priest Basil: and, when the latter died, 20.9.1686, in the Carmelite Convent at Isfahan, Fr. Elias resigned his office as Prior in the Convent in the city, in order to remain permanently in Julfa, where his mode of life is described by Lay Brother, Francis of S. Sirus, author of the *Vita P. F. Elia a S. Alberto*:¹

¹ O.C.D. 320 c.

"He rose three hours after midnight: after an hour of mental prayer he recited matins and prime: said Mass and spent half an hour in rendering thanks: then retired to his cell for contemplation (unless people called to consult him) or to compose a treatise. He had compiled two grammars of Armenian, as well as a dictionary. Finally he read philosophy in Armenian to persons competent to understand. He began the practice of causing the brothers Shariman to meet in each other's houses three or four times a week, when, counting outsiders who dropped in to listen, the numbers sometimes rose to fifty or sixty persons: two hours before the meal Fr. Elias, who kept rigorously to the rule regarding abstinence, would initiate a discussion on some mystery of the Catholic Faith, allowing anyone to express his doubts. . . ."

In a letter of 21.3.1685¹ Fr. Elias thanked their Eminences of the Sac. Congregation for dispensations to the Sarrati family to contract marriages within the prohibited degrees indicated, granted by the Pope and communicated by letter from the Congregation dated 16.10.1683; to the letter of Fr. Elias is attached in the Armenian language a profession of Catholic Faith signed by eleven persons of, or connected with the Sarrati or Shariman family.²

Of this notable race, of whom nothing now apparently remains to be seen at Julfa save a 'Shariman' gate, and 'hammam', a genealogical table has been made of such members as are mentioned in the archives consulted for the present work: and it is an appendix to this volume: possibly the Mechitarist monastery at Venice will have more complete information, or municipal records in Leghorn and Venice from 1700.

Another letter of Fr. Elias, 19.7.1686,³ asked Rome for a faculty for a house to be taken at Julfa

"at least for a hospice until a Residence could be made there with the sanction of our superiors. The Visitor General has refused, and indicated to us as a hospice, whenever we go to Julfa, the house of Fr. Lucas, the Armenian Dominican. . . ."⁴

These methods of Fr. Elias in making the Faith known proved more effective than preaching: daily the Catholic party among the Armenians grew: and, seeing this, the brothers Shariman decided to make for the Latin rite a second church at Julfa with a small convent, large enough to hold five or six Religious. On 18.12.1691 this new church for the Latin rite was opened by the title 'Holy Patriarch Elias' in buildings inherited by the Sharimans from progenitors. Finding that they had some money, about 3,000 scudi, left for some pious use several years previously for which they were trustees, the brothers applied it to the maintenance of the Religious in this new foundation.

Not having sufficient assistance from members of his own Order Fr. Elias took to help him a Religious of the third Order of S. Francis, a Frenchman named Fr. Cherubin in the service of the Bishop-elect of Baghdad, and started a more formal school, where in one year's time more than 80 sons of leading Armenians in Julfa were studying, to the great increase of Catholic numbers. He began catechism for the men on Sundays, mainly attended by the poor, for afterwards in alms bread and a little money collected by the richer Catholics were given them: on Wednesdays there was catechism for the women.

In his MSS. *Vita P. F. Elia* Lay Brother Francis of S. Sirus relates how the Jubilee year was published and observed in Julfa. Fr. Elias preached in Armenian. On the second day there was a larger gathering and a procession of the faithful at the church of the Jesuits in

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 495.

² On 20.5.1689 Fr. Elias forwarded to the Sac. Cong. a profession of faith of a vartapet, Michael (O.C.D. 236 a).

³ O.C.D. 237 h.

⁴ Besides the Visitor General, Fr. Agnellus, others found excessive the limit to which Fr. Elias went in accommodating the Shariman family:

"Our 'Residence' at Isfahan is closed neither night nor day: anyone entered the convent. The Armenians made it a 'caravansarai', so that on certain days it was full of horses, and horses placed in front of the cells of the Religious. . . ."
26.10.1684, O.C.D. 237 k.

Julfa: on the third day at that of the Dominicans:¹ on the fourth in the Carmelite church: and so in turn till the Jubilee 'visits' and exercises were completed:

"In Isfahan there were no functions whatever, although there are in it three churches, "i.e. ours, that of the Augustinian Fathers, and that of the Capuchin Fathers, because that "city is inhabited entirely by Muhammadans, so that ceremonies cannot be performed "with the like publicity as at Julfa. . . ."

In passing it may be set down for general reference that by 1669 there were 12 Armenian schismatic churches existing in Julfa, according to the report of the Fr. Guardian of the Capuchin mission in Aleppo,² and one schismatic Armenian church in Tabriz.

The MSS. *Vita P. F. Elia* went on to relate that with the increasing boldness of the challenge by Frs. Elias and Cherubin to the schismatic Vartapets and priests "the Devil put it "into the heart" of some of them to suggest to the myrmidons of the Shah that the male children of the brothers Shariman between the ages of ten and fifteen years should be carried off and educated in the haram of the Shah, and their fathers thus forced to abjure the Christian faith. It was due to complaints and pressure by Fr. Elias, and to large sums expended by the fathers that certain of Shah Sulaiman's officials were won over to represent to the Shah that the boys would serve for nothing—they were *nijis* (unclean) and deformed in body. By such reasoning the Shah was persuaded to order the immediate restoration of the boys to their fathers, much to the joy of their families and the Carmelites, and other Christians. To escape further analogous 'inconveniences' the faces of the boys, as well as of the girls of the family, were treated with some unguent, which damaged the skin and flesh in such manner that the children would be marked for life "because the king could not take males or females scarred "in the face". In 1692 the Kalantar of Julfa and the chief Vartapet Stephen joined in composing against Fr. Elias a memorial to the Shah which bore 600 seals—those who have lived in modern Persia will recall the practice and method, when interested parties wished to make a protest or begin an agitation: papers covered with the names 'Hasan', 'Riza', 'Abdul Husain', etc., for which purpose bunches of bogus seals were indeed alleged to be kept. But the Shah tore in pieces the memorial, saying that for the sake of 'four dogs of Armenians' he was not going to invite the hostility of the Christian princes, who had recommended to him the Carmelites: and he chased away the petitioners. The Kalantar of Julfa and the bishop Stephen fell out over the money spent in getting up this memorial: the latter succeeded in winning the people to his side, and by bribes had the Kalantar deprived of office, whereon to avenge himself the Kalantar became a renegade to Islam.

¹ This is one of the first contemporary allusions to the *Dominicans* being established in Julfa. A minute in the *Sacr. Cong.* (*S.R.*, vol. 517, p. 301) on 29.4.1694 represents the Master General of the Dominicans as stating that "Dominican "Fathers had been established in a hospice in Julfa for some 10 years past," i.e. since about 1684. The letter of Fr. Elias, the Carmelite Prior, dated 19.7.1686 (*O.C.D.* 237 h) speaks of Fr. Lucas the Armenian Dominican already having a house in Julfa; but apparently it was not maintained consistently, e.g. on 21.4.1691 (*S.N.R.*, II, p. 3) Mgr Pidou wrote: "the church "of the Dominicans abandoned 3 years ago will be lost unless they send people"; and on 22.9.1691 (*S.N.R.*, II, p. 11) that: "Fr. Hyacinth David Hovannes, an Armenian Dominican, formerly a student in the Urban College, Rome, arrived a few "days ago here, where he can effect more and indicate errors." It is their church in Julfa, in the erection of which they were much aided by Gaspar Shariman (*vide S.N.R.*, II, p. 173, letter from Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P.: "Gaspar Shariman "who provided all the money to buy the house and later fixed an income of 40 scudi for it"), which alone of the four Latin churches has endured unruined to this day, and been in use till 1935 by the French Lazarist (Vincentian) Fathers.

As to the *Jesuits*, their church in Julfa had been enlarged at the expense of Markar Shariman in the spring of 1691 (see *Vita P. F. Elia* and *S.N.R.*, II, p. 3). Bishop Pidou writing, "one of the finest churches in the Levant being built."

The *Capuchin* province of Touraine in 1669 had 14 mission posts in the East, the chief one at Aleppo, 3 in Mesopotamia—Baghdad, Diarbakr, Mausil; 2 in Persia, Isfahan and Tabriz (founded 1656); and then, besides 3 in Cyprus, 2 in India, 1 in Egypt, they were working in Georgia, where 8 Capuchins by order of the *Sacr. Cong.* arrived in October 1669, and found 3 old missionaries at Tiflis (*S.R.*, vol. 423, p. 339). At Erivan, as the result of Armenian vartapets and bishops stirring up troubles in Tiflis, Fr. Gabriel de Chinon, founder of the mission at Tabriz, died in 1668 from outrages suffered (*S.R.*, vol. 419, p. 428). They were still at Tiflis in 1672. On 26.3.1671, however, the Procurator of the Capuchins, Rome, asked the *Sacr. Cong.* that, as being nearer and more convenient to their base, Italian Capuchins hitherto working in Cyprus be substituted in Georgia for the French missionaries from their province of Touraine (*S.R.*, vol. 436, p. 378). In a report of 1672 a Capuchin Father of Georgia wrote of 200 Armenian families being at Qazvin. By 1679 (*O.C.D.* 241 d, Fr. Angelus, 16.9.1679) the Capuchin missions in Mesopotamia were in a bad way from oppression by the Turks: their churches in Baghdad lost, in Mausil abandoned: at Diarbakr they were in misery: in Aleppo unable to celebrate Mass in the daytime.

² *S.R.*, vol. 423, p. 670.

For some time the numbers of the Carmelites had been growing at Isfahan: six, apart from the Vicar Provincial, signed a document in June 1689; and with new arrivals in 1693 there were four Fathers and a lay brother at the convent in the city, five Fathers in the new hospice at Julfa. Never before (since the early Church at last) or since can there have been so many Catholic priests in Isfahan, or in one place in Persia: so that Bishop Pidou, in his letter of 29.6.1694,¹ announcing his approaching departure to Hamadan remarked:

"If the bishop-elect (of Isfahan) bewails that I am abandoning him in the warfare and "fierce persecution by the Osniesensi or schismatic Armenians, who are now more than "ever infuriated against the missionaries and all Catholics, whom they want to chase away "from Julfa, I reply that the 25 or more missionaries now here ought to suffice him without "me or mine. . . . In the present emergency I have several times called into counsel all "the missionaries: and it was almost decided to petition the Christian princes to help us "and to put a check on the insolence of these daring men by placing an arrest and embargo "on their goods at sea and on land . . . although I have always been opposed to such "violent remedies. . . ."

On the part of the schismatics some idea of the temperament and turbulent methods of the Vartapet Stephen may be gauged from the following reference in a letter of 23.2.1694² to the Sacr. Congregation:

". . . the new Armenian patriarch, Nahapiet, is very troubled by the revolt raised against "him by Stephen, the rabid schismatic bishop in Julfa, who tried by intrigues and money "to have him (Nahapiet) deposed by the king of Persia, although he has already been "confirmed by the latter. . . ."

There are several documents and accounts dealing with developments in the situation at Julfa from March 1694 onwards—a lengthy letter in Latin addressed to Pope Innocent XII himself by Fr. Elias of S. Albert on 7.8.1694;³ another, with different details, written by him on 10.8.1694 to the Cardinals of the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide;⁴ Lay Brother Francis of S. Sirus' interesting recital in his *Vita P. F. Elia a S. Alberto*,⁵ whose companion he was for several years: and Fr. Elias' long narrative about the persecution of the missionaries, written in July 1694⁶ and enclosed in his letter of 10.8.1694 cited above. This last will be used as the basis for the following version of events, with details of interest, where omitted, collated or added from the other documents specified:

". . . In Julfa the Catholic Faith had become considerably spread, as I have informed "your Reverences in my letters during the past 15 years: in this present letter, to my great "grief, I have to report to you its serious ruination.

"We already had a house there and, wishing to enlarge it, about the end of March "last past I bought another contiguous, paying for it 525 piastres and, the owner having "given possession of it to me, I opened up in the wall of a room in our first house a door, "so as to be able to get into it (the new premises). The title-deeds of this new purchase "were not handed over to me, however, by the seller, as he delayed doing so until promises "that he had made to give another adjoining had been carried out. After six weeks' "peaceful possession the schismatic bishop of Julfa, named Stephen, having got to know "that I wanted to utilize the ground of another house in order to build a church, deter- "mined to make every effort to prevent it. Gathering his ecclesiastics, therefore, with "some leading merchants and the Kalantar, i.e. the burgomaster, he stirred up the people "against us. Proceeding in a crowd to the square a short distance from that house recently "purchased they planned to assault it and set it on fire, if they were unable to break down

¹ S.N.R., II, p. 104.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 110.

² *Idem*, p. 95.

⁵ O.C.D. 320 c.

³ *Idem*, II.

⁶ S.N.R., II, p. 293.

"its doors. I was warned of that, and sent to the ambassador of Poland begging him to "dispatch some armed men to defend us. Meanwhile, the door being closed, some of our "followers mounted on the roof of the house in question, having provided themselves with "large stones to throw at anybody attacking it. The rioters had gathered in the square, "when one of the oldest men harangued them and advised them to refrain from the intended "use of force as being always productive of harm: he added that it would be better policy "to constrain the seller to cancel the contract of sale by another legal document, and by "this means get back the house from us by legal paths. Abiding by this counsel they "frightened the seller with such grievous menaces that they induced him to promise them "that he would not hand over to me the documents, with which I could have proved the "purchase, but he would not bind himself to more. While they were still arguing with "one another ten armed men, dispatched by the ambassador of Poland to guard the gate "of our house, arrived in Julfa: and it so happened that when the one of them, who first "arrived, came galloping in, carrying a stick in his hand, all that vile rabble dispersed as "if a whole army had been attacking it. Some fled into the neighbouring church with "their Vartapet, others into shops like the Kalantar—and in such great fright that many "turbans¹ were to be seen scattered about the square. At once two of the men dispatched "by the ambassador of Poland went off to find the Kalantar, who was taking shelter with "his chief man: and they protested to him that he would have to answer for it to the king, "if this tumult were to grow, and bloodshed result from it. Terrified at this both he and "all the others ceased their violence altogether, and the uproar stopped.

"This ambassador is Ignatius Zapolski, of the Society of Jesus, of a very noble Polish "family, of much culture in letters and admirable in his virtues, qualities which render "him highly agreeable to all the missionaries. . . . The uproar having been quieted on "this auspicious intervention in the manner described the schismatics applied themselves "to artifices. They sent Khwajeh Gurgis, the seller of the house and his sister, and Khwajeh "Markar, nephew of the Kalantar with a priest, who all with great humility prayed me "to desist from my purpose, but I would not listen to them. Besides, the Kalantar himself "came to discuss matters with me in the house of Khwajeh Markar, and proposed to me "that we should leave this new house adjoining the other, which we had owned for about "5 years past and in which we officiated according to the Latin rite, and that I should "retire to our first Armenian church, he promising to let me have another tiny house "adjoining that for my dwelling. I answered that I well perceived that they wanted to "cheat me under the cloak of an amicable settlement, seeing that, when they had been "able to induce me to abandon two churches for one, they would have deprived me of "that, too: that, had they from the beginning dealt with me in a friendly way, perhaps "in order to keep the peace I should have given way to satisfy them, but that, as they had "irritated me with that disturbance, I considered myself constrained to defend the justice "of my case. Vexed at these words he reproached me for what his Vartapets were saying, "complaining of me as one who had come to carry off the sheep from their sheepfold. . . . "He next demanded of me whether in truth we had been dispatched by the Pope to preach "to and convert them, and whether they were not real Christians in such wise that they "could consider themselves baptized and participating in the other Sacraments. To the "first point I replied that I should be able to prove it clearly with the Brief of His Holiness, "which I had, and with others which I was awaiting from Rome. As far as pertained to "the second point I said that very many heretics of various sects are truly Christian, but "none of them Catholic—such were the schismatic Armenians infected by other errors, "among which were (a) that they would not mix a little water in the wine in the chalice, "when they celebrate Holy Mass, obstinately going against the commandment of the

¹ The use of the turban (usually red in colour, *vide* Krusinski's memoir) on a shaven, or partly shaven, head appears to have been general with all classes in Persia in the seventeenth century, not only Shah 'Abbas I is so portrayed, but in the drawings of Olearius the common people on the road, and here the Armenian Christians are mentioned as turbaned. A portrait of an English merchant, born at Angora, living in European Turkey in 1775 and later to the knowledge of the present compiler, shows the turban as his headdress.

“universal Church, and (b) that they would not name the Sovereign Pontiff of Rome, but “on the other hand they did their heresiarchs . . . for that reason, moved by pity, the “Supreme Shepherd and vicar of Jesus Christ was dispatching missionaries to call them “back, being sheep which had strayed from his flock, and that in this he had no other “interest but zeal for their eternal salvation.

“Informed of my firmness the schismatic bishop resolved to gain by means of gold the “favour of the royal officials and, in order to have me expelled from Julfa, offered 3,000 “Tumans, which are equal to 45,000 Roman scudi—so large was the sum of money he “had accumulated by his simony and extortions. This at the time was a most powerful “medium, seeing that the government of the country was entirely in the hands of the “officials in question, the king being unable to give any attention to it owing to his long “illness, which had already reduced him to extremities, as will be told later.” (In his Latin letter to the Pope, 7.8.1694, Fr. Elias stated: “The larger part of this money having “been distributed among the grantees at the Court, and expended in gifts to be presented “to the Queen Mother”).

“In order the better to attain his end he (Stephen) employed every artifice to obtain “some motive for accusing me to the Court and therefore sent secretly to put to me some “questions, in particular regarding the prohibition I had issued to Catholics against going “to heretic priests for confession and Communion: and by the intermediary of the persons “sent he begged me to reply in writing. But I would only answer that, though I had “preached that prohibition in the Maidan of Julfa, it was not my duty to reply in writing “to questions put to me. He further challenged me to a disputation in public, astutely “designing, on such an occasion when there would be a concourse of people, to stir up a “disturbance of some kind and then make an accusation against me. But I replied that “our case was not to be decided by arguments on matters concerning the Faith, but by “the findings of the Law, which they had broken with such open violence.

“When all these and other insidious stratagems had been overcome, another was laid “for me by the schismatic bishop.

“There was living close to the house mentioned as purchased one of their chief priests, “of whom he had made use in laying snares for me. So he cleverly induced the latter to “open in his wall contiguous to the house in question a door through which entry could “be made into ours, and to take possession of it by spreading the false statement that he “had bought it. To this end he was going to hand the priest 15 Tumans, and would “constrain Khwajeh Gurgis to accept them in payment of his house. But, before this was “put into execution, Khwajeh Markar, the second of the five Shariman brothers, who in “Julfa are our great defenders, got to know of it. So, taking counsel with his other brothers, “they at once pulled down the house in dispute, in order to deprive those rascals of the “possibility of seizing possession of it. That done, we came to the conclusion that the site “was large enough for a commodious little church, and forthwith opened up the foundations “for it. For the solemn blessing of the site we fixed Sunday in the octave of Corpus Christi, “which this last year fell on the 13th day of June: Mgr Louis Marie Pidou, recently con- “secrated bishop of Baghdad, sang Mass and a sermon was preached in Armenian. At “the end of the Mass the Holy Sacrament was carried in procession, and it caused the “citizens of Julfa great and reverent wonder, for they had never before seen so stately a “function.

(The *Vita P. F. Elia* has here: “. . . in the presence of the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan “of Fr. Zapolski, S.J., and all the missionaries and all the Catholics of Julfa: 12 stones “were laid in position in the names of the 12 Apostles. Mass was sung solemnly on the site “of the High Altar to be. . . . Many Armenians declared that, as soon as the new church “was built, they would no longer attend the schismatic churches. . . . As a counter-move “the new Kalantar and the arch-vartapet Stephen forbade Armenians to work on the new “church and Muhammadan labourers had to be employed. . . .”)

“But equal to our satisfaction was the annoyance caused to our opponents, and so they

"decided to write a long letter to the Queen Mother, 'patron' of Julfa¹ (having gained 'over the supreme magistrate of Isfahan, and Agha Kamal, the chief eunuch). They 'besprinkled it with bitter complaints against myself and the Sharimans, saying that I 'had entirely perverted their religion, inducing very many of the citizens of Julfa to become " 'Franks', i.e. Europeans, Christians and subjects of the Pope: that I was from time to "time sending Armenian boys to Europe, thereby depriving his Majesty of his own vassals: "that the Sharimans had remitted large sums of money to the Christian princes: that in "former time, when our Discalced Carmelite missionaries had induced to become Christians "some 'Turks' from the district surrounding Julfa, these men had been condemned to "death by the king, who had forbidden the Fathers to continue a building begun in the "upper part of Julfa and ordered them to withdraw to the convent in Isfahan: they urged "that similar action should now be taken, when they (the Carmelites) were continually "causing disturbances. To the long letter, thus briefly summarized, were affixed the "signatures and seals of 900 persons, some voluntarily, others out of fear. some indeed had "not consented to their names being put, or their seals affixed.

"This petition was presented by the officials to the Queen Mother. When we learnt "of this we resolved to take counsel together as to the way in which it would be expedient "to resist their iniquitous dealings: to this end we met in our house at Julfa on the 6th "June, Trinity Sunday. There were the missionaries of the other orders, Augustinians, "Capuchins, Jesuits, and Fr. Stephen, Provincial of the Dominican Fathers of Nakhchiwan, "and others. At this first conference by common consent it was decided to send to the "Kalantar the said Fr. Provincial of the Dominicans, Fr. Antony the Augustinian and "Monsieur Gaudereau, vicar of the Bishop of Baghdad. They were to protest and warn "the Kalantar that, if the Armenians of Julfa did not desist from the many outrages, which "up to that day our missionaries had endured, they (the missionaries) would notify of "this both the king of Persia and the Christian kings and princes and that, if any bad "result ensued, they (the Armenians) could only blame themselves for it. They proposed "to him (the Kalantar) three conditions for the peace to be kept:

- "(a) That they (the Armenians) should allow them (the missionaries) to reside in peace "at Julfa, without molesting them, both because the Persian king had so given "orders, and because a like liberty" (of residence) "is allowed in Europe to all "Armenians, both ecclesiastics and lay-people;
- "(b) That they should not speak ill of the Pope and of our own countries;
- "(c) That they should molest no one going to Communion with us, or having dealings "with us.

"As the Kalantar did not reply to these proposals, but began to shuffle, after the blessing "of the foundation-stones and the solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament related "above we met again at our house on the following Sunday. It was settled at this conference "that, if our opponents rejected the just proposals of peace, it behoved us to proceed to "defend ourselves: that we ought, therefore, to point out to His Holiness and Christian "princes of the Catholic religion how they (the Armenians) in Europe and India were "being so kindly treated: . . . that, nevertheless, before taking these steps, complaint "should be made to the Persian king by the Fathers regarding the riotous demonstration "against their house in Julfa. That was settled in the third conference held the following "Sunday at the convent of the Augustinian Fathers (in Isfahan), and it was added that "there should be no delay in putting it into execution. This conference was held in the "convent mentioned, because there had been a gathering to celebrate the feast of the "canonization of S. John de Facendis, the Augustinian: Mass was celebrated with pontifical "rites by Monsignor the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, and Monsignor the Bishop of Baghdad "preached in Latin a panegyric of the saint. There was a very solemn procession through "the convent and garden, with Mgr the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan carrying the most

¹ Most villages in Iran have one or more ground landlords: what exactly 'padrona' signified here is not clear: Julfa could hardly have been *milk* (owned absolutely): was it *tiyul*?

"Holy Sacrament, and Religious of various Orders carried a fine statue of the saint. In fulfilment of the last resolution there was written in Persian a petition addressed to the Queen Mother as 'patron' of Julfa: and I was to present it. But an accident caused delay in it being put forward: a certain Khwajeh Markar with considerable experience in such matters, whose directions we were to follow, became seriously ill. . . . With this delay in our moves, those of the schismatics were already so far advanced that it was judged expedient to await the outcome: and mainly because it was not to be thought that a decision would be issued without first hearing our side of the case.

"But we found ourselves mistaken in our expectations, because the Queen Mother, after receiving the petition (of the schismatics), as related, considered that her vassals were being unjustly oppressed, and then and there induced the king, who had been primed in advance by valuable presents, to order that the building we had begun should be destroyed, and that we should be expelled from our Residence there. The execution of this order was committed to the Diwan Baigi, i.e. the president of the civil court of justice: so with his retinue ("200 men" according to the *Vita P. F. Elia*) and with the Kalantar, bishop, Vartapets, priests and a great number of Julfa people on the morning of the 12th he went to our house: and as I had at once hurried there, he asked me why I had pulled down the former house, of which I had wrongfully possessed myself.

"I replied that I had paid the owner the price agreed and that he himself had put me in possession of it: that I was unable to produce the original title-deeds arose from the fact that the owner had delayed handing them to me until he sold me the other part of his house, and that he had promised me all this, but that it had not been put into effect because he had been stopped by the Kalantar and Vartapets: I said that the latter had contravened the orders of the king and the permit granted me by his Majesty, by which I was given the option of buying and building houses in all his realm without anyone being able to molest me.

"He (the Diwan Baigi) asked me for that permit, which I at once showed him¹ and which, when he had read it, he put inside the breast of his garments. Twice I asked him to give it back, and he answered that he wanted first to examine it, and that afterwards he would return it to me." (The *Vita P. F. Elia* here adds "pointing out that it did not specify the town of Julfa"): "Having said that he ordered that the vendor of the house should appear: he questioned the latter who, although intimidated by the presence of the Kalantar and the bishop he was shuffling, nevertheless admitted having received the price of the house and having himself given me possession of it.

"Then the Kalantar produced another and ancient decree of the king, on the strength of which the people of Julfa claim that no European may reside in their town. The Diwan Baigi read that decree over to himself, and at once directed us to leave Julfa that same day and withdraw to our convent in Isfahan." (*Vita P. F. Elia* adds here: "and thence submit a memorial to the Shah. Fr. Conrad interposed the trite, but impolitic remark that, if the Shah's *raqams* were not to be executed, they might as well be burnt: whereat, angry and talking of cutting off the German Carmelite's head, the Diwan Baigi gave orders to raze the church to its foundations.") "Not satisfied with that, the schismatics pressed him to forbid us rigorously to return to Julfa and, when he had been given a meal, he did as they wished.

"The so-called bishop further requested that he (the Diwan Baigi) would compel us to give a written bond to pay 100 Tumans, should we act contrary to the prohibition—but the Diwan Baigi contemptuously rejected his importunate demands. None the less, after he had been conducted to the house of the Kalantar and presents given him, he sent off some of his principal officials who forced us to put our signatures to the fine. The Shari-mans were made liable to the same amount, if they did not denounce us, were we to appear in Julfa.

¹ This was the 'privilege'—the *raqam*—granted by the Shah after the defeat of the Turks before Vienna (see p. 421, where a translation is given).

"So, as quickly as could be we removed everything from our house, our weeping Catholics 'helping us to put the things into houses near by, in order that in the confusion many 'things should not be lost. Meanwhile the Vartapets, priests and common people feverishly 'demolished the chapel buildings, which was already 3 or 4 feet high, leaving the site 'covered with broken bricks.

"On these we then gathered together and sang the 'Te Deum laudamus', thanking the 'Lord for that outrage suffered through the preaching of his holy Gospel, at which those 'present were much touched. Then, after a brief exhortation, and a blessing given to 'our Catholics, the gate of the ruined chapel was closed from the inside and, when we 'had gone out, the Diwan Baigi's officials shut and sealed it. All the neighbours were 'weeping, particularly the women, who from the doors of their houses watched us depart, 'but we comforted them by telling them to persevere and be constant and hope with us, 'by the help of the Lord.

"As a counterpart to the sadness of the Catholics was the delight of the heretics and 'schismatics, who were beating the boards which serve them instead of bells above their 'churches. At the great convent of the schismatic bishop there was still greater noise, 'drums and pipes celebrating this triumph of iniquity. On that day indeed the bishop in 'question granted a dispensation from the fast which precedes the feast of the Trans- 'figuration of the Lord, which is observed by the Armenian ecclesiastics who call it "'Quinquagesima'. So great and so insolent was the impiety of the enemies of the Roman 'Church.

"Meanwhile, when I reached the last house in Julfa, I desired to fulfil the precept of 'Christ our Lord and, taking off my shoes, shook off the dust from my feet. . . . The 'Persian officials of the Diwan Baigi, who were conducting us, understood the sign and 'said to one another that we wanted to show that the fault fell on the town. Continuing 'our journey we met two Portuguese Augustinian Fathers by whom we were courteously 'lent the two horses they had, and so we got away the quicker from those Persian officials.

"Arrived in Isfahan with a companion I went at once to visit the ambassador of Poland, 'with whom I found the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, legate from the Pope. . . . After 'consultation over what had occurred it was thought advisable to send Fr. Joseph Maria 'Rousi, a Capuchin, and Monsieur Gaudereau, vicar of the Bishop of Baghdad, so that 'in the name of the archbishop, of Fr. Stephen, Provincial of the Dominicans of Nakhchi- 'wan and of the reverend Zapolski, ambassador of the king of Poland, they should make 'a protest to the Diwan Baigi and state that news of the insult done us would be sent to the 'Christian princes, whom it would concern to show the anger due. He made reply that 'it was no matter to acquaint princes, as it concerned solely possession of a house taken 'without the due formalities, and it only remained for him to give the king more accurate 'information through the intermediary of 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, his chief minister.

"The schismatics, not satisfied with our expulsion from Julfa, turned on the Sharimans, 'and to the accusation of having sent money to Europe added the other of having changed 'from the Armenian sect to the Catholic religion. This with the zealots of Muhamma- 'danism is a capital crime, as whoever wants to change his religion must profess that of 'his Shah, or die. But the Persian monarch commuted the sentence of the supreme penalty 'to a monetary punishment, which from larger sums was reduced to 550 Tumans. Although 'at the time I was greatly grieved over this these gentlemen consoled me by writing that 'they had never expended money more usefully and gloriously.¹ All that was insufficient,

¹ See covering letter of 10.8.1694, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 110:

"What most consoled me in this deplorable occurrence was to see the great constancy of all our Catholics, children 'and women as well as men. . . . But among them all there was no one to compare with our 'Judas Maccabaeus', 'Khvajeh Markar, the second-born of the five Shariman brothers, in front of the judge sent by the king with more 'than 100 men for the execution of this warrant, and in the face of the pseudo-bishop Stephen with all his schismatic 'clergy, of the Kalantar and all his faction who had gathered for this spectacle, declaiming against the malice and 'ignorance of that pretended bishop, and offering to let himself be cut in pieces rather than submit to the latter's blas- 'phemous errors and sacrilegious orders."

"however, to sate the hatred of the schismatic bishop against the Catholics, and, although 'he had said that he only wanted us (the Carmelites) driven out of Julfa, he still tried 'hard to expel the Jesuits,¹ Dominicans and the vicar of the Bishop of Baghdad and his 'missionaries. They were also saying that, if the 'Turks' did not slaughter me, he himself 'would kill me." The letter to the Pope added: "Two Armenian Catholic priests of ours 'are nevertheless daily performing their rites in our former church, together with two 'deacons and various followers, whom our opponents have not been able to frighten away 'from the duty by promises, nor by charges made against them on that account before 'the Persian magistrates. All our Catholics assemble with the greatest constancy, and are 'present at the prayers and Masses they say, rendered, as it were, more fervent by this very 'persecution." The letter of 10.8.1694 covering the narrative of Fr. Elias, explained, however, that: "The two Armenian priests of ours, urged repeatedly to go and submit themselves to 'the jurisdiction of the (schismatic) diocesan with promises of very good positions in any 'church where they might wish to minister, replied that they were satisfied with the bread 'they ate in their Catholic ministry. When threatened to be divested of their priests' 'cassocks and have their beards shaved, which is considered here a sort of degradation,² 'and, last of all, to be handed over to the Diwan Baigi and, according to the customs in 'these countries chastised with hundreds of blows from sticks on the soles of their feet till 'the nails fall out,³ answered that even without cassock or beard they would not cease to 'perform their office, and in any case would glory in being tortured and even killed for 'the true Faith. They hid themselves, however, for several days, saying Office and cele- 'brating earlier and more secretly than was their wont, until the Sharimans complained 'to the Court of that injustice and obtained that they should be served by their own 'Armenian priests without any hindrance. During this period the Catholics did not dare 'even to visit us in our convent in the city, as the king's master of the household had 'threatened Khwajeh Markar that he would lose his head if they talked to the 'Franks', 'and so we comforted one another by exchanging letters and advice as to what could be 'done to remedy matters: now that the storm is somewhat abated they come to visit us 'in our convent in the city of Isfahan. . . . In any event, in order to insure the mission 'and the Bishop of Isfahan (whom I hear you have chosen me, all unworthy, to be) against 'similar insults from the schismatics, all here are of opinion that it would be very expedient 'to show some resentment of such violences against the principal leaders of this persecution, 'who are the Kalantar Khwajeh Lucas (whose brother Khwajeh Kalandarandeh and 'Stephanos, father of Aviet who too helped much to fan this fire, perhaps are still in Venice, 'or in Leghorn), Hovannes and his son Gregory, Aviet and Hovannes Karamanian, Carapiet 'son of Zachariah Gurak and others, their correspondents and agents, some of whom are 'always in those ports of Italy. If here they were to hear but once that the smallest reprisal 'would be made against them for the harm caused to Catholics, financial interest being 'the mainspring of all actions with these people, all here would come to our feet, and be 'the first to beg the Court to have satisfaction given us, in order to obtain by our mediation 'their effects there. . . ."

The main narrative of Fr. Elias of July 1694 turns, in its concluding portion, to the nemesis which overtook their enemies, particularly the chief Vartapet Stephen:

"Meanwhile Divine justice began to punish him, seeing that, as he became vindictive

¹ See *S.N.R.*, II, p. 119, the French Consul at Aleppo, Monsieur Beauvillier, under date 22.12.1694 (*S.N.R.*, II, p. 119), disclosed that:

"He" (Stephen) "wanted to chase away from Julfa all the missionaries, and destroy the fine church which the Shari-mans had erected for the Jesuits; but the Portuguese Augustinians stopped this by threatening to make reprisals" (on the Armenians) "in India."

² Forcible shaving of the beard and moustache was still in the twentieth century an insult to Persians, as was experienced during the War of 1914-8.

³ This is the process of the bastinado, in common use in Persia till 1912: *chub khurdan* = to eat sticks. Edmond About, in *Le Roi des Montagnes*, has also described this punishment.

"towards an Armenian bishop, named Vartapet John, accusing him of being a Catholic because he used to have communication with us, the Vartapet in question joined that "Kalantar (Aviet) who the previous year had been removed from his office by the animosity "of the schismatic bishop and who, to escape his enmity, had professed Muhammadanism; "and they plotted the ruin of the common enemy. They accused him of having had the "Quran translated into Armenian with a refutation of it, and other books attacking the "Muhammadan religion. For this he was summoned to the inquisitory tribunal of that "faith and, convicted on the evidence of 30 Muhammadan witnesses who swore to this, he "was condemned to be burnt alive. The Queen Mother protected him, however, and "demanded that execution of the sentence should be suspended. We are awaiting the "outcome of this and our own re-establishment in Julfa: for this we have some hope from "the grandees of the country, to whom we have represented the injustice done us, and the "vengeance on the Armenians that our indignant princes may perhaps take. This has "made a great impression on the Qurchi-bashi, i.e. general of the old militia: and on this "account he has blamed the precipitate sentence of the Diwan Baigi: in fact the latter has "repented the deed in such a way that one of his familiars has related to us that he (the "Diwan Baigi) had said he feared retribution might fall on his house for what he has done "to ours. We hope, therefore, that he will return to us the writing (document), by which "we can re-establish ourselves in Julfa. 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, i.e. the Grand Wazir, received "with much benevolence the petition that I presented him for the king in this connection. ". . . It is worth mention, finally, that while the schismatic bishop was on his way to the "chief judge he was wearing a watch, which he had bought for 24 Tumans, as he wanted "to offer it to the Shah; but it happened to drop on the road and was broken to pieces. "At this accident, turning to those escorting him, he said to them that they should turn "back with him, as he considered it an ill omen; but those men, flattering him, answered "that, if his conscience did not prick him for any wrong done, he should continue on his "way without any fear. Then, raising his eyes to heaven, he said: 'God knows, I have "never done any harm to anyone.' When he had to appear the following Sunday in the "presence of the judge, he dressed himself in white, thinking it might be the last day of "his life. Questioned in the examination whether he had written the book in question "(i.e. the refutation of the Quran) he answered that he took an oath that he did not know "even how to write. Astonished at this reply the judges answered: 'How is it possible that "you being a bishop, are unable to write?' To this he rejoined that the bishop's office "among the Armenians consisted in the life and good example led, and the teaching given. "He also offered 1,000 Tumans to the judge to take a favourable view of his case, but the "latter would not accept anything. So true is it that the sons of darkness are wiser than "the children of light."

(The *Vita P. F. Elia* adds: "The Armenian *ter-ter* (priest), who had gone round collecting "seals to the memorial against Mgr Elias, was bastinadoed, and died the same night as a "result. When the arch-vartapet Stephen was interceding for this poor old priest during "the bastinadoing, a renegade Georgian rebuked him with: 'O dog! it is not I who beat "you or have you beaten, but Pope S. Leo, whom you curse in your Mass, and St. Elias, "whose church you have destroyed'. Some time later, accused of having married an "Armenian to the daughter of a renegade Georgian, he (Stephen) was seized, taken to the "Maidan-i-Shah, and there himself bastinadoed.")

This long narrative is signed and endorsed by most of the Catholic notabilities then in Isfahan:

"In witness of the truth of this narrative I have signed

"Fr. Elias of S. Albert, Vicar Provincial of the Discalced Carmelites of Persia, and
"Bishop-elect of Isfahan.

"Fr. John Francis of S. Hermengild, Prior of the Discalced Carmelites of Isfahan.

“Fr. Bruno of the Blessed John of the Cross, C.S.” (i.e. Discalced Carmelite).

“Fr. Joseph Ignatius of S. Mary, Vicar of the Discalced Carmelites of Julfa.

“Fr. Conrad of the Assumption, C.S.

“Fra Francis Mary of S. Sirius” (also a Carmelite).

“I, Paul Baptist, Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, witness to the truth of this narrative of the Armenian persecution. . . .

“Ignatius Franciscus Zapolski, Legate and Plenipotentiary of the king of Poland to the Persian king.

“I, Fr. Stephen Mary, Provincial of the Dominicans of Nakhchiwan, O.P., testify that this has happened.

“We also are witnesses: Fr. Gaspar of the kings, Prior of Isfahan of the convent of the

“Augustinians

“Fr. Antoninus of Jesus, missionary of the same Order.”

* * * * *

* * * *

While he was writing that narrative, on 29.7.1694, there was brought to Fr. Elias news of the death of Shah Sulaiman, who had fallen ill¹—“was confined to bed”²—about the time of the expulsion of the Carmelites from Julfa. (Fr. Krusinski’s *Memoirs*, however, speak of Shah Sulaiman

“having been confined to his bed for two whole years by a very painful gout during which, “being shut up within the walls of his haram, none but eunuchs came near his person”.)

* * * *

¹ According to Fr. Elias’ letter to the Pope, 7.8.1694, *S.N.R.*, II.

² *Idem*, 10.8.1694, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 110.

REIGNS OF SHAH SULTAN HUSAIN (1694-1722): AND OF THE AFGHANS SHAH MAHMUD (1722-1725) AND SHAH ASHRAF (1725-1729)

ACCORDING to the edition by Fr. du Cerceau of the *Memoirs* of Father J. T. Krusinski, for some twenty years a member of the Society of Jesus at Isfahan, Shah Sulaiman left, by different mothers, two sons capable of succeeding him, the elder named 'Abbas Mirza, the younger Husain, who had to his detriment a bodily deformity—legs that were monstrously crooked, and withal he was splay-footed: he was born without ambition, and liked solitude, and had been wrapped up in reading the Quran, so that they gave him the nickname 'Darwish'.¹ Contrary to the usual practice the father did not nominate as his successor 'Abbas Mirza, or any successor at all—perhaps with some secret inclination towards the younger son; and he is portrayed as cynically warning the eunuchs, under whose influence he had completely fallen that, if they desired a martial monarch, they should choose 'Abbas Mirza, but Husain Mirza to enjoy a peaceful time. However, the grandmother of Husain Mirza had considerable influence in the Haram and, acting vigorously, found no great difficulty in gaining the adherence of the chief eunuchs: when that of some of the late Shah's wazirs and chief officials had been similarly secured, her grandson was proclaimed as Shah Sultan Husain, 'Abbas Mirza being put under stricter ward inside the Haram.

“Today, 7th August, at the second hour after midnight, his *elder* son Sultan Husain, aged “26 years and 7 months, was proclaimed Shah”,

recorded the Carmelite Fr. Elias of S. Albert in his letter to the Cardinals of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide, 7.8.1694.²

The new Shah did at first attempt to assert authority, and it was done out of piety and obedience to the precepts of the Quran and the religion of Islam—an edict prohibiting the use of wine absolutely: and Fr. du Cerceau's work mentioned above represents the young monarch as causing all wine vessels in the palace to be brought out into a public place and there broken to pieces. The Armenians at Julfa, who with the Jews would, as till this twentieth century, alone undertake the crushing of the grapes and making of the forbidden fermented liquor, were prohibited from bringing any wine into the city under penalty of forfeiture of the entire property of the delinquent. Grandees and courtiers had been accustomed to drink wine for a century or two: and, on the reaction of such influential sentiments to the edict, the eunuchs obtained the intervention of Miriam Baigum, the young Shah's maternal grandmother, for whom he always retained much tenderness and who, being herself addicted to wine, was annoyed. She feigned herself sick and had conveyed to the young monarch the impression that, if he valued her life, he should permit her to drink a little wine, that being, according to her physicians, the sole remedy that would relieve her. Alarmed at the pretended dangerous condition of his grandmother, Shah Sultan Husain sent an express messenger to the Armenians of Julfa for some wine. They, apprehending a trap, declared that since his Majesty's prohibition they had not a drop left, but hinted that some might be obtained at the Polish envoy's house (then, as in the present times, such representatives enjoyed 'diplomatic immunity'). When obtained the Shah poured it into a cup and presented it with his own hand to his grandmother who, however, refused to drink, unless he tasted of it first: and, as she backed her refusal by

¹ A recluse living on alms.

² *S.N.R.*, II, p. 108. It is to be remarked that Fr. Elias makes him the *elder* son (in the Latin *major*): this upsets Fr. Krusinski's version of the palace intrigue, explains the father's hesitation in naming the elder, deformed and a recluse, his heir: it was 'Abbas Mirza, who was the younger rival.



SHAH SULTAN HUSAIN

Reproduced from the engraving in *Travels into Muscovy and Persia*, by M. Cornelius Le Bruyn, 1737, in the Department of Oriental Books and MSS., 10003 f.p., British Museum, "le roy Hoseen", facing p. 211

[By permission of the Trustees]

sistence that he, the Shah, was above all laws, Sultan Husain was unable to withstand her, drank a large cupful and took such a fancy to it that he abandoned himself completely to indulgence in it, so that—in the words of the *Memoirs* cited—"it was rare to find him sober".

Two other factors in the young Shah's temperament call for comment before this narrative of his reign is illustrated in detail from the experiences of the European Religious—his absorption in the effeminate life of the 'Haram' or 'Andarun', and his reckless extravagance. Fr. duerceau's book observes:

"It was a great burthen to the State to maintain the 'Haram' in the degree to which it 'had risen under this prince, who had trebled the expense of it to what it was in the time 'of his predecessors: none of them came near what we have seen of this kind in his reign, 'either for the vast number of women, with whom he had filled his 'Haram', or for the 'extraordinary luxury and splendour in which he maintained them. His first care in the 'beginning of his reign was to cause a general search to be made for all the handsome 'women in Persia and to order them to be brought to his 'Haram'.¹ . . . he boasted publicly 'that he would spare no cost to outstrip the most voluptuous kings that ever were in the 'world. . . . Each of these women had her particular eunuch and chambermaid and, as 'to the expense of the toilet and provisions, it had no bounds. . . . Besides what he laid 'out upon them in the 'Haram', he gave them a considerable portion when they went forth 'to be married . . . the Shah bestowed women not only on his courtiers, but also on the 'inferior officers of his palace and his very cooks. . . . From the great number of women 'we may infer what an attendance there must be of eunuchs for their service or their guard ' . . . never king of Persia had so many, for they almost equalled the number of his own 'guards."

Moreover, the 'council of eunuchs', which Shah Sultan Husain allowed to form, was of black and white eunuchs, mutually jealous: and this brought that spirit of faction into the palace rule, which the Safawi Shahs from 'Abbas I had encouraged among the inhabitants of the towns and which in Isfahan in Muharram 1714 led to so fierce a fight that, before the two factions were separated, the royal guards are stated to have been obliged to put some 300 to the sword:² in every town one faction would refrain from marriage contracts, from eating even with the other, so great an animosity had been fostered.

Yet Shah Sultan Husain was still more lavish on building, in which he buried immense sums, and even exhausted much of the royal treasure accumulated before his time. Though his ancient palace (at Isfahan) was so sumptuous and magnificent, he pulled it down and built a new one with an expense that showed he did not value what it cost. This building was scarce completed but he undertook a new one, yet more considerable, at Farrahabad, one of his pleasure-houses, about one league from Isfahan. The buildings, which he raised there, were so vast and magnificent that he was tempted more than once to remove his 'Haram' thither, and to make it his usual residence.

Another trait that sheds light on the sudden collapse of his empire and the craven submissiveness of the huge population of the capital to a small force of invaders, and in which Shah Sultan Husain was marked out apart from all his race, was his aversion to the shedding of blood—the 'pacifism' of a whole generation: the *Memoirs* of Fr. Krusinski assert that: "for twenty years or more that his reign lasted he never passed one sentence of death", and relate that once, firing a pistol over the heads of a number of ducks swimming on a pond in the palace gardens in order to frighten, but not hurt them, this Shah was so unlucky as to wound some of the ducks: he was as terrified as if he had really committed murder, calling out: "I am polluted with blood" and that moment causing 200 Tumans to be given to the poor in atonement of such a sin!

¹ Writing in his *Secondo Viaggio* Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia, who was in Persia 35 years later, stated: "That time is still 'remembered in Persia: it is enough to say *Kizlarun Ili*, i.e. 'the year of the girls' = 1700."

² The accuracy of that statement from Fr. Krusinski will not be challenged by anyone who, as late as 1906, lived in touch with the faction warfare in small provincial centres in the south—in Jahrum, or Bihbihan-Qanawat, for instance.

So easily influenced to display zeal as a Muslim ruler, it is not surprising to find him making pilgrimages—but on a vast scale! Fr. du Cerceau's book speaks of one

"which not only completely drained his exchequer, but also ruined all the provinces through which he passed . . . to Mashhad, which is above 200 leagues from Isfahan, attended by all the women of his 'Haram' and followed by a train of 60,000 men. . . ."

The Dominican Fr. Peter Martyr from Parma, writing from Julfa, 30.10.1706, gave the description of another:¹

"On the 28th August" (1706) "the king at last came out of his palace in the city, and left the city with all pomp and magnificence and a most numerous retinue of soldiers and officials, as also of all the nobles of the Court, and with all the requisites for a long journey, being determined to visit various places in his kingdom, in particular the tombs of his father and his ancestors, which are in the town of Qum between Isfahan and Tabriz and to gird on the sword (a ceremony wont to be performed by these kings only there), and then to pass on elsewhere. He quitted the city and, after having remained for several days in certain of his gardens in the neighbourhood, on 23.9.1706 he departed to about 'three leagues' distance and then with his people and pavilions taking up as much (from what I have heard from an eye-witness) as another two leagues of countryside, planting wherever he halts a large movable town altogether composed of tents. (It is true that, having himself fallen ill and many of his people as well, of whom not a few died, among whom his grandmother of very advanced age who travelled with him, determined that she too would go to visit the tomb of her son, king Sulaiman, it wanted little for him to turn back, but later he plucked up courage and continued on his way slowly. . . .)"

"It is the custom in Persia," so runs the account in the Krusinski *Memoirs*, "that, when the king removes from Isfahan along with the ladies of his 'Haram' to any of his pleasure-houses, a proclamation is made three days beforehand of the hour in which he intends to go abroad and the streets through which he is to pass. This proclamation is called the *Kuruk*: and it is to forbid every man from staying in the houses that look into the streets, through which the king is to pass, or in the country for two leagues round. . . . The law, which banished men from all places through which the king passed . . . did also keep off his own guard: he could have no other but his eunuchs, who surrounded the whole troops with guns and swords . . . not to mention those that were employed either to search the houses by which they passed to see if no man lay hid there, or to scour the country, in order to put to the sword any they found within the limits prohibited by the *Kuruk*. . . ."

The Carmelite Lay Brother, Francis Mary of S. Sirus, in his MSS. *Vita P. F. Elia a S. Alberto*² provides confirmation of this death penalty. When on their way back from Hamadan to Isfahan in July 1695 Bishop Pidou of Baghdad and Fr. Elias were

"approaching Isfahan they could not enter because the Shah had ordered a *Kuruk*, when no one is allowed to pass (for 24 hours or two or three days) on pain of his life: when the Shah leaves the palace with his concubines, passing from one garden to another, for several leagues round anyone found on the road has inexorably to be killed by the eunuchs and soldiers of the guard. So for three days they had to remain in the tent on the banks of a stream. . . ."

So, too, 19.11.1700³ Bishop Pidou wrote:

¹ S.R., vol. 559, pp. 549-50.

² O.C.D. 320 c.

³ S.N.R., II, p. 380.

“ . . . The raids by Baluchis up to 7 leagues from Yazd . . . have obliged the Shah to “send troops against them. As this prince is more than ever given over to wine and card-playing and dice, it is to be hoped that he will trouble less the inhabitants of Julfa, whom “he had worried by his frequent excursions with his womenfolk.”

To a carouse of this Shah in January 1706 was due the destruction of the first Chihil Situn (“Palace of the ‘Forty Columns’”) in the Chahar Bagh at Isfahan, which had been erected by ‘Abbas I and, greater misfortune still, of the paintings sent as gifts from Europe or specially done, including all the collection formed by that dilettante, ‘Abbas II, which today would have doubtless been of immense artistic and pecuniary value: writers on architecture of the Safawi period may take note of this authentic and precise dating of the existing Chihil Situn, the second building over a century posterior to the first. The writer was the Dominican Fr. Peter Martyr (afterwards Archbishop of Nakhchiwan), 12.3.1706:¹

“ . . . About the 12th January at night time there happened here a notable occurrence, “a stupendous event, viz. the king being with his grandees at a sumptuous supper in the “finest and most magnificent of his palaces—called that of the ‘Forty Columns’ ” (i.e. Chihil Situn) “because its ceiling all painted and gilded is supported on forty great pillars of wood “of no small height and thickness, covered and adorned with gold and glass, the walls “similarly enriched with gilt work and paintings, among which were both profane and “sacred, i.e. of Christ our Lord and the Blessed Virgin—he being, I say, in the hall in “question (although some persons will have it that he had already left it and gone out), “fire, I do not know how, attacked the base of one of those pillars and with the greatest “velocity mounted to the top of it, and set alight the ceiling and in turn all the other “columns. So in a short space of time it was completely burnt out—the whole of that “immense hall, which had been built at very great cost and by the labour of many artisans, “had been reduced to ashes, without the many people who had run there with water, of “which there was no lack there, being able in any way to extinguish the conflagration or “save anything from the hall. In this a judgment of God was plainly seen, as according to “some the Shah himself testified with his own mouth: and it might in all piety be said that “this was the judgment of God who would no longer tolerate those holy pictures being in “such a place and especially among profane and droll ones; although for that matter I “doubt whether they will omit to place others similar in the new hall, which is already being “built once more, similar in everything to that burnt and destroyed. Indeed I hear it said “that the king’s officials are going about collecting and getting together the pictures they “find anywhere in order to put them in place of those burnt, and that in particular they “have taken various pictures brought freshly from Europe by Stephen, father of Basil and “John, who about two years ago were in Rome, among which there were some sacred “pictures, especially two large ones of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, and of S. “Dominic, which were to have been bought to be presented as gifts to our” (i.e. the Dominican) “church, but from having been retained too long there in the City have fallen into “the hands of the infidels, and will be put in this place or others similar, or will be for the “use of the king or indeed for some officials of his. . . .”

In his zeal for Islam, too, or yielding to the intolerance of powerful influences at his Court, Shah Sultan Husain would appear to have used, in 1697 or 1698, oppressive measures against the minority creeds in the vogue of those by his grandfather, for a report of Bishop Elias of S. Albert during his stay in Rome, considered in the Session of the Sac. Congregation, 13.6.1702,² used the following words:

“ . . . After more than 20 years of continued persecution of the Catholic religion . . . “the hostile schismatic Armenians . . . now found themselves—evidently in punishment

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 481.

² *S.R.*, vol. 541, p. 455.

"of their wonted perfidy—constrained to renounce the name of 'Christians' which alone appeared to remain to them, since by the arbitrariness of the now reigning Shah Sultan Husain, whom the flattery of certain of his officials in giving him the surname 'Din-Parwar',¹ i.e. 'zealous promoter of the religious law', has instigated, all races, subjects of his dominions, are obliged to profess the Muhammadan religion: after having begun this by the forced circumcision of the Gabrs of the ancient Persian belief, still remaining worshippers of the perpetual fire, who lived in a very populous suburb above Julfa: passing on to wanting to do the same to all the Christians of Julfa some four or five years back, the decree for which would have already been issued, had it not been for its execution being prevented by the king's grandmother who is owner and overlord of Julfa: yielding therefore to such powerful patronage for the time being, they attacked the somewhat more remote villages, little short of a hundred, by exactions of an intolerable grievousness, in order to compel them to find escape from these by having recourse to the immunity of Islam. . . . After my departure from the capital, according to the news which reached me while I was in Poland, they tried to do the same in all the province of Kapanistan in Greater Armenia, but those valiant peasants obliged the satellites sent to effect this to withdraw. Now I have received letters informing me that the pernicious design has been at last carried out in Qazwin, formerly the royal city of Persia, one thousand and some hundred Armenians having been made Muhammadans by force. . . ."

* * * * *

* * * *

With the foregoing contemporary lights on the character and habits of the new monarch for the reader to penetrate the background to the stage in the struggle of the missionaries to maintain their footing and protect the ground won, the story of the schismatic Armenian reaction to the work of Mgr Elias of S. Albert and their vindictiveness may now be resumed from the point at which it was left at the end of the preceding reign. After the expulsion from Julfa the first step of the Carmelite Provincial was to hurry off to Rome early in August two Religious, Frs. Conrad and Joseph Ignatius, in the guise of Procurator and Substitute to attend the Chapter General of the Order, with his report on the untoward events and his urgent appeal for support. Perhaps ten Religious was more than the convent in Isfahan could comfortably hold and finances would permit, for several Fathers were sent away, one to Basra, another to Kung, a third was returned to his province owing to ill health; while Fr. Elias busied himself with the compilation of a Latin-Armenian dictionary and the composition of several controversial works—the author of his 'Life' states that he left at his death a box half full of writings in Armenian. In addition to Armenians and Catholics who came to visit him there were Shiah Persians, who then as nowadays enjoyed religious disputation—as the manuscript² puts it:

"because in Persia there is not that prohibition against discussion of religious problems which exists in Turkey, where it is punishable with death: in Persia one can give his views freely without the least danger. . . ."

Several letters of Fr. Elias during 1695³ mention and repeat the steps taken by him in Isfahan to obtain reparation:

"With the newly installed Shah Sultan Husain I have done everything possible to represent the injustice done to us contrary to the privileges accorded us out of regard for His Holiness, the Emperor, and other Christian princes, we being here, as it were, hostages and intermediaries for the good relations and friendship between them, as in many

¹ Persian for "fosterer of religion".

² O.C.D. 320 e.

³ 18.3.1695, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 120 appr.; 23.5.1695, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 131; 24.5.1695, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 133.

"memorials I have protested this to all the chief officials of the Court; but, when I had brought it to the notice of the king through the more efficacious intermediary of a very powerful cunuch called Ibrahim Agha,¹ he (the Shah) gave orders that I should be re-established in Julfa with all the losses done in the destruction of the church, which I had commenced to build, made good to us. But, by having recourse afresh to the Queen Grandmother, mistress of Julfa, and by scattering money once more among the promoters of their bad case, the schismatics had this order suppressed too and obtained from him another, which they assert to be absolutely destructive to the Catholics, threatening to be able by virtue of this to expel also all the other Catholic Fathers and missionaries and to punish all Armenians in communion with them.² . . . On this our enemies became so conceited that they celebrated another triumph. . . . So now, humanly speaking, there remains no other hope of preserving the Catholic community here except that suggested in my previous letters—either some embassy to the new king with congratulations on his accession to the throne, accompanied by complaints about the terms thus infringed, or else some resentment to be manifested against the schismatic Armenians trafficking in all parts of Christendom, in order that they themselves be obliged to arrange for the fire they have lit here to be extinguished. This last I believe could easily be effected by an order of His Holiness in discussing this business with the ambassadors resident in Rome of those Christian princes who are more zealous for the extension of the kingdom of Christ. I have written of this in particular to his Majesty the Emperor, by whose recommendation we had been enabled to establish ourselves throughout Persia; and your Eminence will better be able to decide who the more suitably can be asked to interest themselves in this business so important for the welfare of so many poor sheep abandoned to the jaws of the wolf. . . .

". . . During my absence from Julfa the reverend Jesuit Fathers, together with Fr. Cherubin of the Third Order of S. Francis, my faithful companion, with all submissiveness to my instructions are attending to the comforting and encouragement of the Catholics, and after my expulsion Fr. Cherubin continued to gather round him the boys, for whom he had previously, along with me, run a very flourishing school. But with these new threats of driving away the Jesuit Fathers and himself he has been obliged to withdraw and join me in the City until we see the outcome of these upsets."

The Carmelite Vicar Provincial evidently considered the second of the alternatives proposed as remedies to be the surer, for in his letter of 23.5.1695 from Hamadan he remarked:

"On account of the bad government at present all ambassadors enjoy small consideration here, being in fact much despised: a more efficacious method would be the compensation, which could easily be obtained from the Armenians in Europe, the agents of our persecutors: . . . and thus I do not doubt that in a few years the whole of this community or the greater part of it, kept back in schism by some of their chief men through intimidation, would easily return to the bosom of our holy Mother Church. . . ."

In a letter on the following day, however, he showed that such action in Europe would have obstacles to surmount:

". . . Only I should inform you that, as our adversaries have also sent various emissaries of theirs to the Christian princes with letters and presents, claiming to justify their proceedings against me as a disturber of their community, and thinking that there too they can suborn justice with their guile, in order to remove any misconceptions I have sent off to various places by different routes narratives certified by irreproachable witnesses as to

¹ "By spending 150 scudi" - *vide* letter of 23.5.1695 - 'a Georgian eunuch', stated the *Vita*.

² The letter of 23.5.1695 adds, "contrary to the ancient custom of the Medes and Persians he (the Shah) changed what he had decreed in my favour. . . ."

"what happened at the rising in Julfa against me, about our being expelled and the destruction of our church . . . none the less, in order to provide any tribunal, to which they might have recourse, with documents and proofs more adequate for their conviction and the due punishment of their crimes, I have handed to the Procurators of this mission proceeding to the Chapter General in Rome a copy of the charge and complaint they made against me and against the Sharimans to the king of Persia through the intermediary of the Queen Mother, which bears more than 900 seals and signatures, for the most part affixed under compulsion or bogus. Having been given to us in secret by a trusty person, who would stand to lose his head were it discovered, this copy it has not been possible to have certified as a true copy, nor indeed to have it translated from the Persian. I think there should not be wanting someone in Rome able to do this. Further I have handed (the Procurators) one of the very abusive books they have printed here against the Apostolic See and the Catholic religion, together with copious explanations and marginal contradictions in Latin. From this without any delay the reason for our disputes and of the final resort by the enemies of our Faith to the secular arm can be judged. . . ."

By 22.8.1695¹ Fr. Elias had again become insistent:

" . . . The bearer of the present letter, Stephen, son of Khwajeh Gaspar (Shariman) and elder brother of the little Basil now a scholar in the college of Propaganda, can relate details of the 'abomination of desolation' here, which obliged him to fly 'to the hills', and of the great risk all their family will run with regard to their worldly possessions, unless we very soon receive some assistance and at the same time our enemies, conceited beyond measure, be humbled. All the rest of the Catholics are in great consternation over a new case, which occurred three days ago, when a certain good Catholic named Giusi who had been constantly plagued for six or seven years past on account of his religion and impoverished by the law-suits brought against him at the instigation of Stephen, the schismatic bishop, finally died with great constancy in his religious Faith, after having received all the Sacraments of the Church from the Jesuit Fathers, without once permitting any schismatic priest to come near him. Stephen forbade his burial and ordered that his corpse should be allowed to remain until on account of the stench his family should be obliged to abandon the building: and he also gave orders that, should any Father dare to go and carry away the corpse, he should be stoned and killed, asserting that he would answer to any court where this might become the subject of a suit. But, after some time spent in altercation, some friends and neighbours more resolute than the rest carried out the corpse and went to bury it without any priest being present. To be thus deprived of ecclesiastical burial causes great apprehension here in the minds of the simple, as being a sign and result of very great malediction. Further to revenge himself also on the relatives of the dead man Stephen immediately put a renegade relative of theirs, who had become a Muhammadan, in possession of some shops and whatever little else there remained of his estate, giving a certificate that everything belonged to the renegade. . . ."

The Bulls for the consecration of Fr. Elias as Bishop of Isfahan reached him, 8.4.1695,² "sent gratis³ by His Holiness".

His first thought appears to have been to go to India for the rite:⁴

"I have received the Brief from His Holiness together with the dispensation from the vow,⁵ but I am awaiting the Bulls for my consecration to arrive in a few days by an Armenian merchant, to whom they were handed in Aleppo and . . . I shall look around and see where the more conveniently and more usefully I can betake myself to be con-

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 146.

³ There were usually chancery fees to pay on the documents.

⁴ Fr. Elias, 18.3.1695, *S.N.R.*, II, pp. *circ.* 120.

² Letter of 24.5.1695, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 133.

⁵ Of the Carmelites, i.e. not to accept prelacies.

“separated. . . . I have written to India to see whether the illustrious Archbishop and his
“Excellency the Viceroy of Goa would be pleased for this function to be done in their
“presence: if a favourable reply come, besides the comfort I should have of being able to
“be consecrated by three bishops, in various localities the opportunity will not be lacking
“for me to deal with the Armenians and in Goa also to see whether the affairs of our missions
“can be arranged. . . .”

Before he could have received any reply from Goa, on 10.5.1695 accompanied by Fr. Therubin the Franciscan Tertiary already named and three servants, he set out on the eleven-day journey by caravan to Hamadan with the intention of being consecrated there by the Bishop of Baghdad; but the latter was desirous of going to Isfahan and thence to Basra, so Fr. Elias put off his own consecration¹ and they returned together, staying on the way at Armenian villages and arriving at the capital, 4.7.1695. The main reason, however, was a change of his own mind, as he disclosed in his letter of 22.8.1695:²

“I am putting off my consecration until the end of September, hoping to receive in the
“meantime some favourable answer to my representations made about a year ago; in the
“hope, too, of the succour asked of His Holiness and the Sac. Congregation: from it our
“Catholic people would derive comfort, and they would gather the more freely and festively
“at the solemnity. . . .”

However, it was October of the following year, 1696, when Don Gregorio Pereira Fidalgo, civilian special envoy from Portugal, reached Isfahan:³

“In a short time they expect in this capital the Portuguese ambassador, who is coming
“with great pomp: some of his baggage mules have already arrived. The Persians have
“already resolved to make war on the Arabs of Masqat in union with the Portuguese.⁴
“If that should turn out successful, the Franks in these lands will regain the esteem they
“formerly enjoyed. . . . Mgr Elias hopes to return to Julfa after the arrival of the ambassa-
“dor, the more so as his great enemy, Stephen the Vartapet, is out of the country. . . .”

Meanwhile, there had been little delay, after the Carmelite Procurator brought the appeal from Isfahan, before Pope Innocent XII acted, for his Brief to Shah Sultan Husain is dated 8.1.1695:⁵

“Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace.
“Among the excellent qualities worthy of a great king, with which Your Highness is
“distinguished, We have it sufficiently and more than well known and established that a
“chief place is demanded by the benignity with which You regard those professing the
“Christian Faith. But, because the propagation of this same Faith is the main object of
“Our desire, We earnestly ask of that same benevolence of Yours that You will grant to the
“Discalced Carmelite Fathers and especially to Our venerable brother Elias, Bishop of
“Isfahan, Your celebrated royal capital, whom We recommend to You very emphatically,
“*free permission to return to the town Julfa* (as they call it) *from which at the instance of the schismatic*
“*Armenian archbishop*, so We have understood, they were compelled to depart, heavy
“penalties having been pronounced against them, should they go back there. But having
“come into the firm hope that You will accede to Our request We fervently pray the Lord

¹ Fr. Elias, 23.5.1695, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 131.

² Letter of Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., Julfa, 5.10.1696, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 173.

⁴ The writer's next letter of 29.1.1697 (*S.N.R.*, II, p. 184) puts the position differently:

“There is a Portuguese ambassador who has come to request the Persians to declare war against the Arabs, but, though
“they have every reason for doing so, I doubt they will adopt such an undertaking.”

⁵ Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, 81, p. 31.

² *S.N.R.*, II, p. 146.

"of lords Who lives in the heavens and from Whom all good things do come, to be propitious and favourable to Your Highness, both with a view to Your complete acceptance of the true Faith and to all the happy condition that belongs to prosperity.

"Given at S. Mary Major, Rome, 28.1.1695, and in the fourth year of Our Pontificate."

"This letter of His Holiness, asking for our readmission to Julfa to be permitted," wrote Bishop Elias to the Cardinals of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide, 27.4.1697,¹

"arrived at a time when our enemies by steps well backed at the Court and supported by the power of their money might have been able to evade what it proposed to do; and, as we had no gifts with which to accompany the presentation of it, as is the custom of this country, I deemed it well to await the coming of the ambassador from Portugal, who was on his way with great state and with rich presents. . . ."

(By royal order the Armenians of Julfa in gala costume were bidden to escort him ceremonially from a garden outside the city²—which to these days has been in Persia a customary halting-place, where anyone of outstanding authority or of exceptional distinction is received by Persian officials and notables and Europeans concerned, and whence after refreshments he is accompanied by them into the city or town.)

"I found him at once excellently well inclined to back up all my designs. He had, too, an express commission from his Excellency the Viceroy of the East Indies, in whose name in presenting that letter³ from His Holiness, accompanied by another from the Grand Duke of Tuscany⁴ with regard to the same subject, he proceeded with great discretion and courage to manage the affair so that at last, when he had overcome all opposition, he conducted us in triumph to our Residence . . ." (i.e. Julfa).

To Pope Innocent XII himself in Latin Bishop Elias, 28.6.1697 (after his consecration) expressed himself greatly indebted on this account:

"With the expression of gratitude due I lay at the feet of Your Holiness the reply from the king of the Persians⁵ to the Briefs, which You had deigned to write in our favour with regard to the matter of our expulsion from Julfa, and along with this I offer You the congratulations of a joyful heart for the success so desired, which the recommendation of so great weight and authority has obtained. For from it there ensued the restoration of our apostolic mission in this chief colony of the Armenians: and thus the bishopric of Isfahan becomes established in the midst of exulting Catholics and of schismatics gnashing their teeth.

"To this the envoy of the king of Portugal, his Excellency Don Gregorio Pereira Fidalgo, greatly contributed by becoming the providential presenter of the aforesaid Briefs of Your Holiness and asking for their object" (to be accorded) "and a reply given to them: for, after very strong opposition and difficulties had been overcome, he himself conducted us triumphantly back into Julfa. On that account I humbly beg Your Holiness to deign to reply with an expression of gratification to his letter attached hereto, together with others. . . ."

Of Fr. Conrad, the Procurator, who must have reached Rome in or before December 1694, there had been

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 186.

² *Vide Vita P. F. Elia a S. Alberto*, O.C.D. 320 e.

³ "The first letters of His Holiness", according to Fr. Elias, 15.9.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 198.

⁴ "And from the viceroy of Goa" wrote Fr. Elias, 15.9.1697.

⁵ No trace of this reply having been received in Rome is to be found in the Vatican Archives.

“no news except that in November last year” (i.e. 1695) “he was in Warsaw in Poland, “on his return journey as Vicar Provincial.”¹

Now

“on Saturday, the 26th of last month” (i.e. December 1696) “to the joy of all Fr. Conrad, “the Provincial of the Carmelites in Isfahan, arrived bringing letters from the Sovereign “Pontiff, the Emperor, the king of Poland, and the Muscovite. . . . He brings fine “presents for the Shah and, though well able to style himself ‘ambassador’, does not wish “to do so. The Khan of Shamakha, through which place the Father passed, seeing that “the Father was bringing letters wanted to entertain him at the royal expense, but prudently “he would not agree to it. That caused much surprise at the Court. . . .”²

His susceptibilities salved, Fr. Elias at last had himself consecrated by the Bishop of Baghdad on the 30th December 1696, Sunday in the octave of Christmas, in the Carmelite convent church in Isfahan city, the Prior of the Augustinians and Superior of the Jesuits being assistant consecrators; the ceremony took place with much solemnity in the presence of the Portuguese ambassador, all missionaries and Europeans (except the Dutch) and the Catholic Armenians.³ In his letter addressed to the Pope, 6.9.1697, the new Bishop wrote:

“By the reverend Fr. Conrad of the Assumption, Vicar Provincial of this mission of ours “in Persia . . . I also am sending the deed of my consecration together with the prescribed “formulae of the oath and profession of Faith taken by me.”⁴

So the letter of 28.6.1697⁵ to Pope Innocent XII, quoted above, continued:

“ . . . Fr. Conrad of the Assumption, Vicar Provincial of the Mission in Persia, arriving “hard upon the steps of the said envoy from Portugal, no less happily contributed to the “more thorough fulfilment of the action so well begun. For he obtained the issue of royal “rescripts (*sanaads*) for the building of our church at Julfa, the confirmation also of the “‘farman’ granted us by predecessors of the king for the Residences already established “and for those to be established as we might wish and for us to exercise our functions “throughout the kingdom of Persia.

“On his request, too, the king commanded that the ruined” (part of) “our Convent in “Isfahan should be repaired at the expense of the public treasury, with regard to which “and other matters worthy of narration he himself” (Fr. Conrad) “can inform Your Holiness more fully. . . .”

Bishop Elias’ letter of 15.9.1697⁶ to the Cardinal Prefect, after mentioning that Fr. Conrad had brought *other* letters from His Holiness, the Emperor, from the king of Poland, the Republic of Venice and Grand Duke of Tuscany,

“and was so adroit⁷ in making use of the authority he held that, in addition to the royal “decree for our establishment and for the erection of a church in Julfa, he further obtained

¹ *Vide* Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., Julfa, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 173, 5.10.1696. ² *Idem*, 29.1.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 184.

³ Mgr Pidou, 23.1.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 180; Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., 29.1.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 184; Bp. Elias, 28.6.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 178.

⁴ In his letter of 27.4.1697 (*S.N.R.*, II, p. 186) there is a curious reference by him to the Cardinals of Propaganda about the title of ‘archbishop’, and grant of the pallium.

⁵ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 178.

⁶ *Idem*, II, p. 198.

⁷ “He did it with the humility proper to a Religious, always clothed in the habit of the Order . . . and certainly “accomplished more than many others who exchanged their dress for some affected magnificence”: *S.N.R.*, II, letter 6.9.1697.

"the confirmation of the 'farman' (of privileges) "granted us by the preceding Shah, "Sulaiman . . .",¹

added the picturesque detail:

"and, as a final ratification of all his transactions, there were bestowed on him for himself, "for me and for the Vicar of Julfa three robes of honour (*khal'at*),² consisting of a dress in "the Persian style, a girdle, and surcoat and a headdress, all of silk fringed with gold and "silver: in these accompanied by many missionaries and European Christians we made "another solemn entry into Julfa, once more as much to the rejoicing of the Catholics as to "the discomfiture of the schismatics. . . ."

The biographer and companion of the Bishop, Lay Brother Francis Mary of S. Sirus, in his *Vita P. F. Elia*, relates the scenes at that entry:

'On the 27th February 1697 two lay brothers were sent in advance to prepare the house 'at Julfa' (the same which had had to be shut up and abandoned in 1694) 'and to notify 'the Dominican and Jesuit Fathers, and Catholic Armenians. The next day was memor- 'able. Fr. Conrad had been summoned to the palace by the Shah. Four small cannon 'which Fr. Conrad had brought amongst his baggage were placed on the terrace together 'with much powder and fired several times. The concourse arrived, paraded all Julfa and 'then went to sing a "Te Deum" to the delight of the Catholic Armenians. On a later day 'after the departure of the Portuguese ambassador the obtaining of the *raqam* for Julfa was 'celebrated by another procession. Clothed in *khal'at* . . . the Bishop of Isfahan, with the 'Shah's *raqam* placed on his hat' (an oriental gesture of respect and authority) 'and two 'other Carmelites followed by all the other missionaries and Europeans on horseback, rode 'from Isfahan to Julfa, where they made the round of the Armenian township, calling at 'the house of the Jesuits, at the residence of the French chaplain of Mgr Pidou, and lastly 'at the Dominican monastery. The chronicle does not omit the detail that Khwajeh 'Gurjin now had to hand over the deed of sale which he had refused to do in 1694.'

Some of the privileges thus extracted from Shah Sultan Husain appear never to have been implemented or utilized—the partly built church for the Bishop destroyed in 1694 not to have been rebuilt, or any church made for him at all, for instance: his letter of 27.4.1697 addressed to the Cardinals mentioned that Fr. Conrad "is till now continuing to press for the execution "of the orders promised by the king. . . ." In that same letter he observed:

"What most contributed to facilitate the business was the absence from the capital of our "adversary, Stephen."

Already in a letter of 23.2.1694 he had³ written:

" . . . The new patriarch, Nahapiet, is sorely tried by the revolt against him manu- "factured by the frenzied schismatic Bishop of Julfa, Stephen, who had expunged his name "from the Mass and Office. . . ."

That redoubtable Vartapet, according to another source of information:⁴

¹ *Vita P. F. Elia* states:

"in addition he obtained a *raqam* of particular importance—for a Residence and church to be built at Julfa, with an "injunction on Armenian owners to sell any house property, the site of which might be needed for the construction of "the church and, finally, with licence to the Armenians to attend that church for Catholic worship without molestation "from the schismatics. . . ."

² A *khal'at* of the early years of the twentieth century was not so extensive, merely a cloak, long garment with sleeves, generally of rich Kashmir material.

³ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 95.

⁴ Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., 5.10.1696, *S.N.R.*, p. 173.

"obtained orders" (from the Shah) "to be placed on the patriarchal throne at Echmiadzin, "and for the deposition of the other patriarch, named Nahapiet: and on the 3rd inst." (i.e. October 1696) "he left for his patriarchal church. All this business happened thus. "Many Vartapets gathering in Armenia sent a petition to the Shah against Nahapiet, "their patriarch, with the consent of many of the people in Armenia, and they dispatched "to Isfahan a certain Azaria of Akuli, their procurator, together with a monk in order to "get Nahapiet deposed by an order of the Shah and have someone made patriarch more "worthy than he was. On his arrival at Isfahan he managed this business so skilfully that "in a short time he obtained an order from the king for the deposition of the old patriarch "and then—I do not know how—he got another royal decree for the Vartapet Stephen, "Bishop of Julfa, to be appointed to the patriarchal see.

"The intention of Azaria (according to what he indicated to some of his friends) was to "have appointed" (patriarch) "a certain Vartapet Isaac, Archbishop of S. Thaddeus, "very noted and esteemed among the Armenians who call him 'Artai Isaac', which means " 'Isaac the Just': and he is well inclined to the Franks, so that once, when he was" (sick) "in danger of his life in a monastery near Abranar, this Isaac received the Sacraments from "our (Dominican) Fathers. But I do not know how Stephen has been made patriarch on "the Shah's order, only that to this end he spent a sum of 500 Tumans—more than 7,000 "scudi. After that the king sent an order to the Khan of Erivan to imprison Nahapiet; but "the Khan, having received the order while in Tabriz, put it into his pocket and then sent "word to Nahapiet about everything, so that the latter might place himself in safety. The "Khan continued his journey to Isfahan, where he had been summoned by the Shah to be "made head of the arquebuse-men, intending to obtain from his Majesty the cancellation "of the order. Nahapiet sent him some thousands of sequins with the promise of a larger "sum, if he should succeed in being reappointed to his see. But the Khan, finding obstacles "in other persons more powerful than himself, was unable to do anything of what he had "wanted to do. So the order from the Shah remaining in favour of Stephen the Vartapet, "on the occasion when the new Khan of Erivan, or rather his lieutenant, had to set out for "his governorship, Stephen accompanied him, having first paid him 150 Tumans. . . .

"The people of Julfa are delighted at his departure, as they will now be free from his "hands, because of a truth 'hated of God and of men' he was liked by very few, detested "by many and feared by all. I wonder how fortunate this new dignity will prove for him! "Many Vartapets and chief merchants in Armenia have written (as I have heard from "persons deserving credence) fulminations to Azaria for having had made patriarch a man "so unworthy of it. (According to what a Capuchin Father writes) they wonder whether, "when Stephen has arrived in Armenia, they will be poisoned because, if they were not "satisfied with Nahapiet, much less will they be with this one. Besides, the old patriarch "has withdrawn from Echmiadzin and now in all tranquillity and not far away is performing "all the offices of a patriarch. Before long this comedy must needs come to an end. . . ."

Six months later—April 1697¹—Bishop Elias goes on with the story:

"In this usurpation he (Stephen) was soon disturbed by claims and complaints made by "Nahapiet and, after being bastinadoed, thrown into a tower.² There he remains imprisoned "and due to pay a fine of 1,000 Tumans, i.e. about 15,000 scudi in compensation both for "this and for all the other violent upheavals he had contrived in the past thirty years . . .³ "by the just ordering of Divine providence the author of all the past troubles, Stephen, was "arrested in Erivan and put in irons in a dark prison: he had been turned out of the patri- "archate, into which he had intruded himself on the restoration of Nahapiet, whom he had

¹ Bp. Elias, 27.4.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 186.

² See *S.N.R.*, II, p. 141. Nazar and Shariman, sons of Murad Shariman, from Venice wrote to the Card. Prefect news of the imprisonment of the Vartapet Stephen.

³ Bp. Elias, 15.9.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 198.

“deposed, and deprived of everything found on him. . . . This, added to his other expenditure in the past four years that we have been most cruelly persecuted (by him), may be reckoned as totalling more than 10,000 Tumans = about 150,000 scudi. . . . With this some of the more circumspect chief merchants began to open their eyes, and to show with much courtesy their desire for reconciliation with me. However, a number of other persons along with the bigoted party of the Vartapets are wanting once more to obtain the disgrace of Nahapiet by writing and obliging the people to sign new defamatory libels against the patriarch. But, as they no longer have anyone ready to disburse the money to bring these to the Shah’s notice, it is not thought that they will achieve any result. . . .”

The Dominican Fr. John Bartholomew records the end of this pugnacious character in a letter of 9.3.1699:¹

“Stephen, the declared enemy of the ‘Franks’, died last year” (i.e. 1698) “in prison at Erivan, on which it appeared that Nahapiet would remain firmly fixed in the patriarchal see: . . . all the same, the ecclesiastics at Julfa and lay-people do not remain quiet: on the contrary, recently in defiance of Nahapiet they have on their own initiative chosen as their bishop a certain Vartapet Alexander, an intimate associate of Stephen, and with much solemnity they have put him in possession, so that now the Julfa folk are separated not only from the Roman Church, but also from their own patriarch. This happened in the month of January” (1698) “some days after an abominable and impious sacrilegious sin committed near the high altar of the principal church in Julfa. . . .”

The version given by the Carmelite Lay Brother Francis Mary in his *Vita P. F. Elia* is that:

‘the governor of Erivan, on the excuse that Stephen had not invited him to the blessing of waters at Epiphany, made him a prisoner. . . . Again bastinadoed . . . he was confined on an islet in a lake and allowed to perish miserably of hunger, his body being eventually found by his followers half eaten by rodents’.

The *Vita* sums up his character as

‘very corrupt, but so strong and influential a personality had he that, had he wished it, he could have obliged all the Armenians to become Catholics’.

The Katholikos Nahapiet had evidently written in 1697, shortly after his restoration and the imprisonment of Stephen, expressing sentiments of respect for the Holy See, calling the Roman Church ‘Mother’: in the appendix will be found the Latin Brief dated 3.5.1698 (Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 82, p. 89) which Pope Innocent XII wrote in reply. It is translated in part below: the Pope was grateful for the expression of reverence: laid stress on all that was done at Rome to make Armenians comfortable there: urged the Katholikos to work for unity: congratulated him on his escape from the machinations of Stephen: sent him gifts by an emissary.

“Pope Innocent XII to the venerable brother Nahapiet, Patriarch of the whole people of the Armenians.

“Venerable brother greeting and the Apostolic blessing. Grievous though not unusual is the sadness cast over the mind of the Pontiff by the frequent remembrance of the very great woes under which the race of the Armenians once very flourishing and of exemplary obedience to this holy See has so long and pitifully been bowed. Still the letter of your Fraternity to Us was able to soften them not a little, for in it you, excellent man and

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 232.

"presiding far and wide over so many people and holy bishops, signified clearly your exceptional reverence for Us and this see. The Roman Church, over which We though unworthy "preside, you call 'Mother'. . . .

" . . . For, though We are far removed by long distances over sea and land from your "countries, still from the watchful care of fatherly affection with which We follow your "celebrated nation We do not omit to attend to your affairs. So, as often as it happens "that Armenian bishops both for the sake of devotion and of humbly paying the due tribute "of obedience to the Prince of the Apostles and to Us come to this dear City, We see to it "that they are very kindly received here and suitably entertained: nay, indeed, We do "not allow any proofs of the Apostolic kindness to be wanting to any other men of the same "race, as We not only forbid expressly any annoyance whatsoever being caused them in Our "temporal dominions, but We wish them therein, but particularly in the aforesaid City, "wherein the Roman Pontiffs Our predecessors, taking thought for the comfort of your "people and from motives of compassion, set apart a hospice and at the same time a church "in which your sacred rites could be freely and fitly celebrated in the Catholic way, to be "kindly received and entreated with due politeness. Clear and manifest assuredly are these "evidences of the affection of the Pontiff for the Armenian race, from which equally in "turn it remains for Us to expect that it will strive to adhere with constancy to this holy "Apostolic Chair. . . .

" . . . So, venerable brother, diligently and with all your heart work hard at this so "salutary care for perfect unity: cease not to exhort, admonish and strengthen your brethren "and all your sons in Christ. . . .

" . . . Meanwhile We would have you know that We heartily rejoiced on hearing that "the fierce storm stirred up against you has now sunk to rest (the Lord commanded the "winds), and that you happily and to the great gain of your reputation escaped from the "machinations of your foes: so We do not doubt that, if the pious mind and inclination you "showed abide with you steadfast and firm, God the Father of mercies who alone does great "wonders, will grant Us still fresh boons and more fruitful joys by the improvement of your "affairs both spiritual and temporal.

" . . . For the rest, to give you more evident proofs of Our fatherly affection for you, "We send you a man of outstanding deserts no less in holiness than in learning, our dear "son Khachatur Arakhiel an Armenian priest, who will more fully explain to you our "sentiments or rather those of the Roman Church, in whose bosom he was educated. Mean- "while We have had conveyed to you certain little gifts as a sort of earnest of Our aforesaid "affection. And We further beg Almighty God to be propitious and favourable to your "Fraternity and to your whole Armenian people: and with all the warmth of Our heart "We lovingly bestow the Apostolic blessing.

"Rome, the 3rd May 1698."

Shah Sultan Husain had written a reply to the Brief of Pope Innocent XII, which asked for the restoration of the Carmelites to Julfa (possibly also this acknowledged¹ receipt of another Brief regarding the Turks, which will be given in due course in this chapter): and, barely six months after his return from his 2½ years' absence, the Austrian Fr. Conrad was once more dispatched Rome-wards by his bishop, even though he held the responsible office of Vicar Provincial:

"I hope that Fr. Conrad . . . who left here in July last will arrive in Rome as soon as "possible with the replies from the king of Persia to the letters of His Holiness and various "Christian princes,² and by him too were sent the papers certifying to the consecration."

"Hitherto," explained Bishop Elias, 6.9.1697,³ "I have found no suitable bearer, by "whom I might send these documents. . . ."

¹ Neither reply is preserved in the Vatican archives.

² Bishop Elias, 15.9.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 198.

³ *Idem*, *S.N.R.*, II.

Success had come to the Carmelites and the Bishop in so far as residence in Julfa was concerned—the French Fr. Basil of S. Charles, 12.9.1697 (*S.N.R.*, II), wrote that he had been made Superior of the Residence in Julfa and had a school with many Armenians, where the teaching was altogether Catholic and well received; but the spite of the schismatic Armenians continued hardly unabated, as the following extracts illustrate:

“15.9.1697. . . . The passionate partisans of the Kalantar Lucas also do not desist from “utilizing every opportunity to display their feelings of revenge: as, for instance, they did “a few days ago over . . . a lawsuit of Khwajeh Gaspar Shariman, on which he has already “had to spend about 150 Tumans, and it is feared that he will have to hand over as much “again from the money of an orphan deposited with him to a man making an unjust claim “to it, backed by a tyrannical bully, one of the royal eunuchs. . . .”¹

“9.3.1699. . . . At Tiflis in Georgia the Capuchin Fathers and the Catholics there are “suffering severe persecution at the hands of the Armenians, stirred up against them by a “Vartapet, who had been sent there on a visitation by Nahapiet. None of the Catholics “there may go to the church of the Fathers, save under heavy monetary and personal “penalties. Similarly at Hamadan, where Mgr Pidou, Bishop of Baghdad is, the Armenians “have turned violently against the Catholics, especially against Ter Joseph, a secular priest, “who had publicly made a profession of Faith in the chapel of Monseigneur, so that he had “to run away. . . . The Armenians have obtained an order from the Khan there that “no one may go to the church of the Bishop of Baghdad under pain of heavy monetary “penalties, and they have had one of the chief men, who is a good Catholic, put in prison, “according to what Monseigneur writes to me. . . .”²

“5.7.1700. The Capuchin Fathers in Tiflis, or Georgia, have again complained of the “Armenians: the latter had told the governor of Tiflis many false things about them, and “so that our Catholics were afraid to come to church. During the time of this Shah we “cannot remain unmolested in this Persian mission, because, when the king has good “intentions, the officials and governors do not fear him and so they take money from the “Armenians, for the sake of which they molest our Catholics and Christians, if they do not “the actual Fathers. . . .”³

The case regarding Gaspar Shariman is of some interest because it had a connection with the noted French writer on Persia, J. B. Tavernier, and was of some importance because of its effect on the plans of Bishop Elias: in one of his long reports to the Cardinals, when he was in Rome, 26.9.1702,⁴ he gives as one reason why he needed to visit Rome:

“the very severe oppression of our chief Catholics, who after more than 20 years of continued victimization at length by the malignity of a certain well-known Armenian “sycophant were brought to the direst straits and together with their families and dependents were being compelled to abstain from frequenting our churches and schools and “indeed from any communication with us.

“I shall briefly relate the case. This crafty person, first of all regarded at the court of the “king of France as a Persian prince and, as such, as a convert to the Faith having been “baptized with sumptuous solemnity, after a series of villainies of the same type cunningly “perpetrated there during several years and afterwards in Germany, Sweden, Poland, “Muscovy and Turkey, on returning to Persia with letters from certain Christian princes, “in part clandestinely obtained and also in part forged in the name of the ‘Comte de Segli’, “boasting himself to be an envoy extraordinary, made himself a Muhammadan at the “frontier of the empire. By these devices therefore he was admitted to an audience of the “king and to the ears of certain of the grandees and began to lay claim to a sum of 28,000 “Tumans, i.e. more than 400,000 scudi, from the Messrs. Shariman, as being money due,

¹ Bishop Elias, 15.9.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 198.

² Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., 9.3.1699, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 232.

³ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 372, Prior Desterro of the Augustinians, Isfahan.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 342.

“deposited at interest with them about thirty years previously by Monsieur Tavernier, a French trader renowned for his *Journeys*, whose heir he claimed to be on account of having married his (Tavernier’s) relative in Paris. As his advocate for this claim he got a very crafty individual, son of an apostate Armenian and nephew of a schismatic priest, who by his intelligence had attained an influential position at the Persian Court. Some false testimony was tendered to the court by the same sort of apostates and against it none of the schismatic Armenians could be brought to give notice about the patent imposture, while Catholic witnesses were rejected as being biased. When, notwithstanding, appeal had been made to other judges and the falsification of the written documents and of his very letter (of credence) as envoy was demonstrated, the Sharimans were secretly cited, and the author of all the malice against the Catholics said that he too knew right well that the claim in this case was frivolous, but that by that pretext he was going to extract from them to the last farthing the money deposited by them at Venice, and in this way to keep them from any rebuilding of our church, which had been destroyed, as also from having any communication with the missionary Fathers and Catholics: and that, unless they did so, besides being despoiled of all their goods, they would also have to be forced to do so. Not only the Sharimans, but also all the other Catholics being extremely alarmed, it was recommended to me, at whom our adversaries appeared particularly to aim in this fierce persecution, to withdraw, as the opportunity of this embassy was offering, and see whether by chance by means of it I might be able to negotiate with the Christian kings and princes something as a remedy to such great tribulation. . . .”

This was in 1699: as to the money in Venice a report, undated,¹ on the Sarrat or Shariman family to the Sacr. Congregation in Rome, where one of them was at the time, was to the effect that:

‘in Isfahan they have 50 domestics, 100 employees in their merchants’ business. Because one of them had unfortunately become a Muslim and, when his relatives die, all their estate will have to go to him, they think of establishing themselves in Christendom and putting part of the family there: and so they have transferred to Venice 200,000 scudi, for 100,000 to be employed in that city, the rest in Rome with the approval of the Sacr. Congregation. . . .’

The money placed in Venice was invested in banks there.² So, zealously championed by Bishop Elias and backed by the other Orders in Isfahan, so that they always enjoyed the esteem of the Roman Curia, and with their extensive trading relations in Venice and Leghorn the Shariman family had not only been granted the freedom of customs at Ancona and the citizenship of Rome, but they were also ennobled as ‘Counts of the Holy Roman Empire’³ and appear frequently in letters so named ‘Conte Marcar’, ‘Conte Stefano’, including those resident in Isfahan. A genealogical tree showing the various members of this family mentioned in the archives in Rome consulted for this work is included as an appendix, for the information of any possible descendants in Europe.

But two of the four surviving brothers broke under the pressure, hardly had Bishop Elias gone off to Europe, for a letter of the Carmelite Vicar Provincial Substitute reported to Rome:⁴

“You will have heard of the apostasy to Muhammadanism of the principal Sharimans, Markar and Michael, on 10.12.1699. They were really persecuted to pay an immense

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 258.

² See Bishop Elias’ memorial to the Doge and Senate, 2.5.1702, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 418.

³ From a standard work on the *Nobility of Italy* the following facts are quoted:

“The Emperor Leopold in 1699 granted to this family (of Shariman–Scerimani) the title of Count of Hungary and kingdoms annexed to it, a title confirmed by the Emperor Francis I by a decree of 24.7.1817. In 1696 it was inscribed by Innocent XII in (the rolls of) the citizenship of Rome in 1736, 1737, 1740, 1742, 1749, 1751 it was made a member of the nobility of Orvieto, Rhodes, Spoleto, Viterbo, Perugia, Macerata respectively.” (See appendix.)

⁴ Fr. Basil, 2.2.1700, *S.R.*, vol. 538, p. 407.

"sum to a miserable Armenian renegade, and became Muhammadans, thinking to free themselves from this vexation. . . ."

In 1697 a second Augustinian Hermit had distressed and shamed the whole European community by becoming a Muslim, marrying and settling in Isfahan: so the letter quoted above continued:

"The miserable Antonio the Portuguese, formerly Prior of the Augustinians in Isfahan, who became a renegade three years ago, is plotting to ruin us, and it was he who advised the enemies of the Sharimans and he will do us enormous damage. He is a rascal to a superlative degree. . . ."

Markar Shariman not long afterwards migrated to Venice himself, and seems to have remained there for the rest of his life, perhaps in order to escape from practice of the religion forced on him, and to live as a Christian: Michael's sons were established at Leghorn.

Another letter, five months later,¹ from the then Vicar General of the diocese emphasizes the seriousness of the situation for the Catholic children owing to the accursed law or edict:

"There is nothing to be hoped of the two Sharimans, who in the month of December last became Muhammadans . . . in this evil and wicked country the son of Khwajeh Markar must become a Muhammadan, when his father dies, so that he may get his father's money, and the same will be the case with Khwajeh Michael. These boys were well educated by Bishop Elias and I have already admonished them many times; but they have now to say whether they prefer to die with or without that money. I do not want to see the fathers die, lest I should see the sons remain without divine life. . . ."

Similarly and simultaneously, the special province of the Dominicans, Nakhchiwan, was suffering from oppression by Persian Shiah officials, and an appeal to the Pope in the Armenian language by the Dominican clerics and people of the diocese, according to the translation in Italian along with it,² runs:

". . . For the Catholic Faith in these regions of Nakhchiwan is steadily going under and the light of the Faith, which formerly shone through the darkness of unbelief, is about to be extinguished. These people, in order to destroy us utterly, despoil us of our goods and take from us by force our wives, our sons and our daughters and, converting them by force to their wicked religion, give them the power, according to the licence bestowed by their law, to seize the goods and possessions of their Christian relatives. Therefore it is that many unfortunate persons, having apostate relatives, in order not to lose the little property they possess, of their own accord become renegades from the Faith. Others having quitted their motherland have gone off, as if they were so many exiled persons, into Turkey, dwelling there, some ten, some twenty, some more years still, without any hope of returning again to their homes, where their wives and children, finding themselves abandoned by all human help and chiefly deceived by those perfidious tyrants, become Muslims. Others, in despair and disconsolate, bewail constantly their own misery. Besides this, the officials of the Persian king, who exact the royal tribute, in various ways torment us, subjecting us to unjust penalties. We pay twice and thrice the tribute due, and so many, being unable to pay, leave their homeland. Others become renegades from the Faith, and yet others go off to live among the Armenians and follow their rites.

"To get free we have no other remedy, Holy Father, than to hope for a visitation from our Lord, and from your Holiness that, moved by a more than paternal kindness towards these wretched children of yours, you will visit us by the person of an envoy to the king of Persia . . . because, although many times together with our bishop we have appealed

¹ Fr. Antonio d'Desterro, Prior of the Augustinians, 5.7.1700, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 372.

² *S.R.*, vol. 538, p. 320.

“to the Shah and his officials at inexpressible expense and laid before them our miseries, “they have given us not the slightest relief. . . . This, therefore, we ask, Holy Father, that “together with the Christian princes You will recommend us and our possessions to the “Persian king by means of an envoy, pious and zealous for the Faith, who will come to us “and, having seen with his own eyes our lamentable state, will make it known to the Shah “and remain at the Court as agent for your Holiness. . . .”

That was dated 20.10.1699, and a postscript added that:

“another fresh ruination for our Christian religion overtook us on the 6th December of this “year, when there arrived here a delegate from the Shah called in their language a *mumayiz* (i.e. expert or assessor) “to write down the names of all Christians, grown-ups and children, “of the monasteries, the Religious and the traders . . . in future we shall have to pay “double tribute. This intolerable burden will cause all the Catholics to flee. . . .”

Means of overcoming the utter insincerity and irresponsibility and venality of Persian administration under Shah Sultan Husain was lacking to all who had business with it: otherwise there was sympathy and understanding in Rome and, even before the appeal was issued, the Secretary of the Sac. Congregation had written on behalf of the Prefect, Cardinal Barberini, to Archbishop Paul Baptist of Nakhchiwan, 4.5.1699:¹

“With sentiments of particular sympathy the Sac. Congregation has learnt from your “lordship’s letter of the straits, in which the Religious and the other poor Catholics of that “province are placed by the ill-usage they receive from the soldiery and other subjects of “the Shah; but the Sac. Congregation is confident that such molestation must cease in a “short time on account of the pressing representations which will be made to the king in “the name of His Holiness by Mgr the Archbishop of Ancyra and by Fr. Conrad and by “Fr. Felix Maria de Sellano, the Capuchin, who have been dispatched to the Court of Persia “with letters and presents from His Holiness on the suggestion of the Sac. Congregation, “in order to obtain divers favours for our Religious and the Catholics in those parts and “also in particular for your Religious. . . .”

In Rome, indeed, the Holy See had not been unmindful of the appeal from Bishop Elias for definitely personal pressure, apart from Briefs, to be brought on the Persian Court, some sign from potentates in Europe of protest and dissatisfaction at the lengths to which the Shah’s eunuchs and officials had allowed the schismatic Armenians to go in harassing their Catholic compatriots and the European Religious. In this grievous situation, then, news arrived that the Sovereign Pontiff had instructed his own sister’s son to discuss various matters with Shah Sultan Husain: true, he was a Carmelite and an Archbishop, on his way to be Vicar Apostolic in the Mogul’s dominions.

“In a few weeks,” wrote Fr. John Bartholomew the Dominican from Julfa, 9.3.1699, “there is expected here Mgr the Archbishop of Ancyra on his way to India. They say that “he is coming with the authority of a Commissary, and Apostolic Visitor. . . .”

This personage is of uncommon interest in these annals and for a full account of his family connections the reader is referred to the biographical section of this work (Fr. Peter Paul of S. Francis): suffice it to say here that, born a great noble, fifth duke of St. Elia, Don Ferrante Palma d’Artois, according to the family records a “very gallant nobleman, but very dissolute”, in 1672 suddenly changed from his wild life and announced his intention to become a missionary. It is true that already two of his younger brothers were at the time in the Order of Discalced Carmelites, a third a monk, a fourth an abbot, two sisters nuns and that his mother, who bore

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 255.

the name 'Carmela', had been sister of Cardinal Antonio Pignatelli, who became Pope Innocent XII in 1691. But that pope had great aversion to anything which might savour of nepotism and would allow no near relative to be a member of the Curia: there was no cardinal *nepote* with him: and it was only after Fr. Peter Paul had laboured for ten years as a missionary on the Malabar coast and in India, had been Procurator from the Missions to the Chapter of the Order and been entrusted with a commission to execute in Portugal, that in the natural course of seniority he was selected to be Vicar Apostolic for the dominions of the Mogul and the Deccan and given episcopal consecration with the title of Archbishop of Ancyra, 1696. He was then dispatched to various Courts in Europe, to the Emperor, to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to the Venetian Republic to secure support for the missions in Persia in their struggle against the schismatics and to arrange, if possible, for an alliance against the Sultan of Turkey. Moreover, he proceeded to Amsterdam to obtain, and did obtain from the Dutch East India Company privileges for the Carmelites to work in the Dutch possessions in the East. By way of Germany, Poland, Russia, the Archbishop of Ancyra reached the Caspian in December 1698. Then, so a sheet headed 'Chapter translated from the English'¹ in the archives of the Sacra Congregation relates:

"Having had news of his arrival on the borders of that realm . . . the Sufi of Persia "gave orders for him to be met and received at the frontier with the greatest possible "honour, assigning him 60 florins daily (for maintenance), and 30 horses for his service. "The Catholic clergy of the capital went out two days' journey distant from the town to "meet him and congratulate him on his happy arrival. When the Archbishop was 3 leagues "away from the City he (the Shah) sent his own secretary to present his compliments to "the ambassador, and the consuls of England and Holland for whom he had letters of "recommendation from their sovereigns.² On the 5th (? May 1699) he made his public "entry. The envoy from Muscovy sent his trumpets and drums, which joined those of the "Legate: these trumpets were preceded by 24 soldiers and next there was the Mihmandar "Bashi with his officials and 24 pages, and after him the Legate, who had on his left the "Bishop of Isfahan, a native of Mons in Flanders: behind the Legate were the consuls of "England and Holland and following them the missionary Fathers of various Orders, "i.e. Capuchins, Jesuits, Augustinians, etc., and the secular clergy, in all to the number "of 180 persons, and 80 baggage horses completed the cavalcade.³

"On the 6th of the month he was received in public audience by the Sufi and at the "audience there were posted in front of the doors of the Palace three elephants and 10 of "the finest and most handsome horses of the Sufi, with bridles and very rich trappings set "with diamonds and other precious stones, so that each horse with its trappings might have "been worth a million. In the rooms through which passed the Legate there were lined "the highest nobility in the kingdom to the number of 400, almost all clothed with extra- "ordinary magnificence. The Sufi was on his throne; and after the Legate had finished his "harangue and presented his letters of credence he was conducted into another apartment, "and invited to dine with the Sufi, and to retain with himself three of his company (who "were the Bishop of Isfahan and two Carmelite Religious). The magnificence of the dinner "cannot be sufficiently described. The Sufi drank three times to the health of the Legate "and his companions: there were 700 dishes, served all with the greatest sumptuousness, "the plates themselves being all solid gold. . . ."

Over that same envoy from the Czar Peter mentioned above there had been a curious diplomatic incident, which should interest as a precedent foreign representatives of today who

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 261.

² At that date the Dutch and English crowns were united on the heads of William of Orange and Mary II (Stuart).

³ It has been, till recent years, the custom in Persia when honoured guests or strangers or friends arrive from a distance, or after long absence, more particularly with State officials of high degree, at several miles from the entrance of the town to prepare a reception with refreshments and carpets and thence all notables in concourse rode in company of the guest into the town. This is termed an *istighbal*.

have to present the 'letters of recall of their predecessor and their own letters of credence', according to the phrase so frequently to be read in Court news.

"This Resident," related Bishop Elias¹ in his letter of 12.6.1699, "when introduced" (i.e. into the presence of the Shah) "at his first audience now more than a year ago, was "unwilling to give his letters" (of credence) "into the hands of any minister, claiming that "the king (Shah) himself ought to take them with his own hands. When the Persians "answered to this that it was contrary to their customs, which could not be altered, after "some disputing, somewhat noisy and threatening on the part of the Resident, he was sent "outside rather contemptuously, and kept confined to his dwelling by a considerable "number of guards. Notwithstanding this, he continued to persist in this claim and he "would never allow his letters to be presented in any other way: so that the Persians, who "on their side would not yield to a claim which appeared to them very prejudicial on "account of the consequence which would result from it of their being obliged likewise to "change their customary ceremonial in respect of all other potentates, gave him his "cong   to depart—which might well bring on some war between these (two) contiguous empires. . . ."

"So," Bishop Elias explains, "in order not to become involved in this incident through "supporting the proceedings of that Resident by making a similar claim (when he had no "such orders to do so) nor through disagreeing with him by handing over the letters in "public audience, Monseigneur" (i.e. the Archbishop of Ancyra) "would not style himself "ambassador from the Emperor, nor from the Czar of Muscovy, both because he had no "such instructions from the Emperor, nor the expenses for the pomp and dignity correspond- "ing, as also because of that very delicate incident which kept the Resident of Muscovy "here litigating in no small perplexity. . . . The decision was that not Monseigneur himself "but I on his behalf should carry the letters to the house of the chief minister, which I did, "delivering them into his own hands, he remaining standing. . . ."

"This so pleased the Court here that for the other three letters, i.e. from His Holiness, "from the Republic of Venice and from the Grand Duke, the king wished immediately "to hold an extraordinary reception, to which Monseigneur was invited. But the latter, "being somewhat indisposed from fatigues of his journey, and besides the presents which "he had to offer not being yet arrived and ready, sent his excuses. So, on the festival "which followed shortly afterwards, 'Aid-i-Qurban . . . on the 9th of this month of June, "he was summoned to the solemn banquet of the festival where, the king alone seated and "on his throne, with all the Court standing, he gave the three letters into the hands of the "Prime Minister, who received them one or two paces away from the king and, taking from "the king's lips the compliments on his arrival, repeated them to Monseigneur, who through "the interpreter delivered his replies, this being done over again some seven or eight times.² "As to the enquiry which the king then made regarding the motives of his embassy, he "made answer by a petition for a private interview either with his Majesty or with some "minister from his privy council. Then he made Monseigneur sit down opposite him, "separately from all the nobles who were drawn up on one side and I was given a similar "seat two steps lower down, opposite, however, to the king, and two other companions were "made to sit down in the style of the whole Court upon carpets, and upon tablecloths of "cloth of gold we were then all served in golden plates a dinner as magnificent as it can be "made in this country. When that was finished the king, contrary to his usual custom, "remained seated till we had all left the hall, and the receiver of the royal guests reconducted "us home with the like pomp to that in which he had brought us, two captains of the guard "also accompanying us. We were led across the great royal square, where at once all the "drums and pipes began to play until we had passed. Now, for tomorrow or the day after

¹ S.N.R., II, p. 264.

² How far this ceremoniousness and aloofness had been pushed from the personal intimate method of Shah 'Abbas I in giving audience to foreign envoys the reader may judge from the accounts already given in this work!

"tomorrow the Shah is having Monseigneur invited to another reception at night, when all the palace is to be illuminated with artificial lights—an honour never paid save to guests who are kings or of royal blood. And so *gloria vitantem sequitur*. . . ."

As appears to have been frequently the case at this period, the Holy See had not, when accrediting its envoy to Persia, sufficiently provided for his expenses with the result that the effectiveness of the mission was hampered, the results spoilt largely: what could be more disconcerting and derogatory, in fact, than for a special envoy to be in debt during his mission? So in a half-humorous lament, on his departure from Bandar 'Abbas, 4.4.1700,¹ the nephew of Pope Innocent XII wrote his experiences of the working of the system which the ingenuity of Persian courtiers had contrived to entertain distinguished foreign visitors at the public charge (in more senses than one) and simultaneously fill their own pockets. No wonder foreign envoys were welcome in Persia, however many!

" . . . From the time I entered Persia there were assigned to me 60 'abbasi per diem for 'my expenses and those of my 'family' " (i.e. suite—missioners and servants), "the king continuing the same bounty up to the day that I quit his dominions for India. In addition, 'I have been provided on my journeys with as many horses and camels as I needed, and 'have always been accompanied by a royal official" (i.e. the Mihmandar) "and many 'soldiers, who had to see to my lodging and whatever might be necessary. My effects 'and my companions have enjoyed a free pass everywhere, and every respect and comfort. ' . . . But, I ought to have received, according to the daily allowance, 3,840 'ungari'.²

"The liberality of the king and magnificence of this Court is perhaps singular, because 'they do the same to every ambassador, even to everyone bringing letters from European 'princes to the king, making no distinction between mere bearers of letters or couriers and 'an ambassador, except in the manner in which they are treated: and they take the measure 'of the allowance to be assigned from the person concerned himself. Had I been informed 'at the beginning of the style used, I could have entered Persia with a larger number of 'servants and greater pomp. But, because I caused it to be said that I was only bringing '20 persons with me, that I should need only 20 camels, they assigned me only 60 'abbasi; 'whereas, had I had 200 or 400, as had the Turkish ambassador, I should have received '200 or 300 'ungari' daily, besides horses and camels on which much gain can however 'be made, because sometimes a lesser number is actually taken and the difference is gain 'which goes into one's own pocket.

"But the crafty officials of the Court, with a nicety of cunning, would never settle up the 'accounts: they would go on refunding me from time to time some sum or other; until, 'when I had been given my *cong  * by the king and was on the point of departure" (from Isfahan) "and it was no longer permissible for me to appeal to the king, who all the more 'unfortunately was at that time far away from the capital, they cut me off more than half" (i.e. the balance due). "It was left for me to recoup myself on the journey from Isfahan to 'this port and I was not mistaken, for the Mihmandar carried a large sum with him. But 'here they have cheated me worse than in Isfahan, carrying me on with fine hopes till the 'last day, and then have given me nothing. Therefore it is that I am in such straits. . . . 'There should have been much profit from the horses and camels, but all went to the 'Mihmandar who accompanied me. He was even too unabashed in his robbing, coming 'to an agreement with the other attendants and had himself allotted 9 shahi for every 'horse and 11 for every camel, for which he paid only 3 or 4 shahi: they divided the balance 'between them daily. In addition, the extortions they commit in every place they pass are 'barbarous, and the officials gain more from them than is ever given to the ambassador. 'For this reason I think these gentry like envoys to come frequently, so as to be able to rob 'the more.

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 541, p. 20

² Florins, from their name originally coined in Hungary, later imitated in several cities of Italy.

"As to the gifts which I made to the Shah, I was asked whether I was presenting them "in the name of the Pope, and of the other princes, or in my own name. I replied that the "papal gifts had remained behind in Aleppo, whence, if his Majesty so desired, he might "be so kind as to cause them to be brought, but that these I had I was offering in my own "name. I presented him with two fine pieces of gold Venetian brocade, valued at 250 " 'ungari': one large clock striking the hours and with an alarm, valued at 140 'ungari': "another smaller specimen, also striking, with a gilt case and enamelled, valued at 210 " 'ungari': one gold filigree work-box with enamelled pictures, costing 150 'ungari': one "clock, with a gilt case encrusted with diamonds given me by the Princess of Valdimono, "of the value of 100 'ungari': an instrument to lift weights, which I had made anew and "which was well liked, estimated at 50 'ungari': some pictures finely painted: two fine "mirrors with filigree frames: a microscope and a magnifying glass. All the above were "valued by the royal officials, well versed in such matters, at about 800 'ungari'. The "custom of the Court is to give back the double of what is presented, but to me they gave "only half, and that partly in money, partly in products of the country of little value. The "organs,¹ spectacles, instruments for lifting weights, and other curiosities, made in Rome "with the 900 scudi given me by the Sacr. Congregation, remained in Aleppo. The king, "or rather his officials, let me know that there was no need for me to wait for these, nor that "I should give them to the king: whereat I was obliged to have them brought at my own "expense from Aleppo to Erivan, where the Khan, understanding that they were presents "for the king, sent them on at the royal expense as far as Isfahan, with the result that all "the articles fell into the hands of the royal officials, who had all the boxes opened, took out "one organ, and I know not if it was the same with the two spinets . . . and the other "things, without giving a word of thanks and not even sending me the rest to this port at "their own expense. This should be made known to His Holiness and the Sacr. Congrega- "tion, so that, if on some occasion the Pope has to write to the king, he may complain of it "and also, if they send ambassadors to Rome, these should be treated as the Persians treat "others. In Shamakha I had already heard of the loss of many clocks and other fine presents "extracted by the governor of that place. Further, there was the loss of the 1,000 'ungari' "given me by the Emperor, which were forwarded to the brother of a rich Catholic merchant "of Astrakhan to be paid to me at Shamakha, where I found him bankrupt. At this port" (i.e. Bandar 'Abbas) "I have been obliged to remain three months and more because there "was no opportunity of sailing and for that reason I had to incur considerable expenses "without recovering a single stiver of the allowance ordered by the king to be paid. It "should be added that I shall have to sail in a Persian native vessel" (dhow), "no ship "at all of the Franks having come this year. The passage money, at however much it be "agreed, cannot be less than 350 'ungari'. Such great losses have upset the accounts as "estimated in advance, the scene being thus suddenly changed from grandeur to poverty. . . .

"So have mercy on me, at all events, my friends. Have pity on my miseries, for I find "myself at present 700 'ungari' and more in debt, but now gayer of heart than ever, and "with greater hope of the Divine protection. Do not forget us, however, your lordships, "so that in a year of public jubilee the Sacred Congregation and His Holiness may dispense "to us liberal alms. . . . On the journey and when staying in houses the customary exer- "cises, Mass, prayer, catechism, short exhortations, are never omitted. Solemn days are "observed with all pomp, no less than in Europe. It makes me glad to see the liberty "which I have had everywhere for public worship, and with all the majesty and devoutness "of our ecclesiastical rites. . . ."

Though nowhere specifically mentioned in the scattered records examined for this work it would appear that this distinguished Carmelite was empowered to treat in Persia on at least

¹ In his letter of 14.1700 (*S.R.*, vol. 541, p. 17) he specified that "the organs intended by His Holiness as presents for "the king of Persia and the Great Mogul have remained for about two years in the customs-house at Aleppo, there being "no one there to pay the duties, and still less the cost of transporting these things by land to Isfahan and to India. . . ."

three distinct questions. One (A) was the old and oft-discussed submission of the Armenian Church to the see of Peter (that included the abandonment of certain wrong liturgical practices): another (B) the protection of the Latin Religious Orders and their Armenian flocks against the machinations of other parties; and (C) co-operation by Persia against the Turks. As to the first, even before Archbishop Peter Paul's arrival, on 9.3.1699¹ a Dominican friar at Julfa was writing:

"... I have heard that Mgr d'Ancyra has a commission to protect Nahapiet, the patriarch of the Armenians. . . . Some people are astonished to see Rome taking it into its head to support a schismatic without there having been any well-founded hope of his being willing to come to a union with the Catholic Church. . . ."

Since the removal of his rival, Stephen, the Katholikos Nahapiet had, as already shown, been in touch with Rome so that the Sacr. Congregation had been encouraged to hope for a good result. Bishop Elias observed, however,² in his letter of June 1699 to the Cardinals:

"as to the change of mind and shuffling of the Armenian patriarch Nahapiet, who has never deigned to reply to the letters I repeatedly wrote him in accordance with the orders of the Sacr. Cong., Monseigneur (the Archbishop of Ancyra) experienced the same: and, far from his (Nahapiet) doing something in favour of union, we find that he is himself the author of the persecution stirred up a short while ago in Tiflis, Ganjeh and Hamadan, threatening the Fathers in Tiflis too if they continue to allow Armenians to go to their church and receive the Sacraments. And, so, let their Eminences see that they do not allow themselves to be tricked by his fine promises and may God not allow the presents, which are said to have been sent to him on the part of His Holiness, to reach him. . . ."

Among the *raqams* or Imperial decrees issued at the request of the Archbishop of Ancyra, such as a permission for all missionaries to re-erect their houses, convents, to exercise their functions, bury the dead, punishment of the culprits at Tabriz of those molesting the Armenians—*vide* the "Statement of what the king of Persia has been pleased to grant Mgr d'Ancyra, ambassador to this Crown on behalf of His Holiness, his Majesty the Emperor, and other European princes"³—was one

"which absolutely commanded all the Armenian race in the kingdom of Persia not to dare in future, any single man of them, to curse S. Leo, with a statement of the fines which would be imposed on those contravening it; and, moreover, that in future none of their priests be raised to the position of bishop or patriarch, unless in obedience to the holy, apostolic See and to our Holy Father—this 'convention' to be executed some day ahead in the residence of my lord of Ancyra by all the heads and bishops of Julfa, by order of the king. . . .!"

(An astounding document—of which the original in Persian would be of unique historical interest, did it exist; but no trace of it, nor of any copy was to be observed with the paper inspected in the archives of Propaganda Fide for this work, if indeed the Archbishop sent it to Rome! A Shiah Muslim monarch imposing doctrinal observances and canonical jurisdiction on a Christian body was a step a good way farther than making and deposing a Katholikos arbitrarily! But in this reign any cheque placed before the Court would be signed without scruple: there would be no intention of honouring it.)

The Archbishop of Ancyra himself observed in his letter from Bandar 'Abbas to Rome, 1.4.1700,⁴ sceptically:

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 232, Fr. John Bartholomew.

³ *Vide* the list, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 341.

² 14.6.1699, *S.N.R.*, p. 264.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol 541, p. 17.

"If the Armenians keep to their promises I hope God will bless them by giving them grace, so that your Eminences can complete that which has been begun. But, if on the other hand (as is the more probable and more customary in their race) they do not keep to them, I shall be equally content with the Divine Will, and beg your Eminences not to trust any more in the letters and promises of that race, nor to hope for their reunion with the Roman Church whether by orders of the Shah, or for the sake of the protection of our Catholic princes. *It should be prohibited for any Armenian to enter the Papal States unless he first make a profession of the Catholic Faith. I would suggest that the Holy See propose to the Venetian Republic, to the Grand Duke* i.e. of Tuscany) *and to the Emperor to have an order jointly issued to their subjects to the effect that, if Armenians do not within a certain time find means of reuniting themselves to their Head of olden time, all their goods in those states will be confiscated.*"

In so forcibly expressing his view of the policy to be adopted the Apostolic Visitor was but allying himself to and repeating the recommendations of Carmelites like Fr. Dionysius, Fr. Barnabas, Fr. Casimir and others from fifty years previously down to Bishop Elias, as recorded in these pages: in the light of their experience, and modern experience who can say that they were not right in the result they foresaw? With these people it was their monetary, their trading interest, their pocket which counted more than any ecclesiastical ordinance. The persecution and campaign of intrigue in Julfa, Tabriz, etc., would surely have ceased altogether.

Independently, in his Memorial of 2.5.1702, personally presented at an audience of the Council, Bishop Elias approached the Doge and Senate of the Republic of Venice on similar lines:¹

"... I venture to suggest that, after so many favours and permits granted us by the king of Persia the missionaries could now easily convert the greater part of the Armenians, who are well inclined towards the known truth of the Catholic Faith, and also could arrange for the complete reunion of them along with the patriarch to Holy Church, the only obstacle coming from some chief leaders, banded together with the bishops and doctors in Julfa who, being unable any longer to do any harm to the missionaries, are applying all their strength to the ruining of families which declare themselves to be Catholic, even so far as to accuse them of the crime of *lèse-majesté* for having invested their money in this most Serene Republic. . . . If it would please his Serene Highness and the exalted College and Senate to write and to cause to be written in their name some letter warning the Kalantar of Julfa and his counsellors among the chief Armenian merchants that, considering the orders of his own king as also the favours which they receive here from the most Serene Republic and the Christian potentates, even to the point of having all freedom to live in their own fashion in this capital city, they should desist from thus directly or indirectly by themselves or others preventing the rightful liberty of the Catholic religion."

There were those among the Catholics, even in Isfahan itself, who disagreed with such methods as advocated above, and considered that the result of the Papal envoy's discussions with the Armenians had been negative: among them Bishop Pidou de St. Olon of Baghdad with all his years of work among Armenians in Europe (although he protested against the Armenian persecution of Catholics and intrigues, like all other Latins):

"Mgr d'Ancyra left here for the East Indies on the 15th November" (1699) "after having taken with small result a great deal of trouble for the conversion of these schismatic Armenians . . . who were from before enraged against the Romans, . . . and I believe that in reality gentleness is more suitable with such persons than harshness and severities and the dire threats, with which they have been irritated beyond measure in the past. *They had promised that prelate to write a letter of submission to His Holiness the Pope, but they*

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 414.

"are always procrastinating, and I do not know what to hope of it. In the meantime, of necessity (having become indebted here to the amount of 50 Tumans) he has been obliged to hasten his departure and his embassy would have been more fruitful, if he had begun with the benevolence with which he finished it, but he was badly counselled. . . ." ¹

Another French opinion is cited in the *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, that of Fr. J. Villotte, a Jesuit for a few years in Persia:

" . . . If the Archbishop of Ancyra did not succeed in reconciling to the Catholic Church "the community at Julfa, composed of 400 priests [*? sic*] and 30,000 faithful" (i.e. schismatics) "it was mainly for want of having handled gently certain susceptibilities of the Armenians. According to this missionary the Legate, contrary to his usual prudence, "settled certain cases in such a way that the Armenian merchants gave themselves out to be "injured in their interests. . . ." ²

As to (B), the second matter of his delegation, the

"Statement of what the king of Persia has been pleased to grant Mgr d'Ancyra, ambassador "from His Holiness, the Emperor and princes in Europe",

already quoted above, gives the following *raqams* or decrees issued at the request of the archbishop.

"A general *raqam*, or order, in favour of all missionaries and their churches in the kingdom "of Persia, permitting them to rebuild their houses, convents, churches, to exercise their "functions and bury their dead:

"Another *raqam* to all governors in Persia that they be scrupulous in carrying out the "above order and applying penalties.

"A special *raqam* for the Capuchin Fathers at Tiflis and their church, already shut, "and another by express messenger from the king to punish the audacity of some "Armenians who in recent months committed some offence against the said Capuchin "Fathers.

"A special *raqam* for Mgr Pidou, Bishop of Baghdad, in Hamadan. A special *raqam* "for Mgr the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan and his province.

"A *raqam* for the founding and enlargement of the convent and church of the Jesuit "Fathers at Shamakha. ³

(The *raqam* regarding the prohibition of the cursing of S. Leo has already been mentioned.)

"Various other political commissions on behalf of the Emperor and other princes granted "him in writing by the king together with a fine letter from 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, chief "minister of the kingdom. . . ."

On the third point (C) the anti-Turkish combination desired, it has not yet been recorded that four years previously, 30.4.1695, Pope Innocent XII dispatched a Brief ⁴ to Shah Sultan Husain to the following effect:

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace.

"We have derived a theme for abounding joy indeed on learning that by right of inheritance Your Highness had taken up the government of that most famous country. For

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 536, p. 121, Isfahan, 23.11.1699.

² 1930, vol. IV, XXIII.

³ Perhaps this was the building, the subject of the Brief of Pope Innocent XI, already cited.

⁴ Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, 81, p. 43.

"fame spread everywhere made public that there belongs to You that greatness of spirit
 "for doing brave deeds so that We reach a strong hope that, joining with the arms of the
 "Christian princes against the most savage race of the Turks Your awe-inspiring might, You
 "will with one accord unite and combine together to destroy it altogether and also vigor-
 "ously oblige it to restore the provinces which, inflamed ever more from day to day by an
 "insatiable lust of enlarging its impious domination, it has appropriated up till now.

"Now We, as is due from Our office, add strong encouragement for this objective of Your
 "Highness, while We shall not omit earnestly to ask Him, at whose nod all movements on
 "earth take place, to grant a prosperous outcome to the plans which You may have ordained
 "to take in hand for the increase of the Christian commonwealth and Your own kingdom,
 "but in particular that He will mercifully pour out the light of the Faith, without which all
 "things are vain and empty.

"Given at Rome . . . the 30th April 1695. . . ."

One Religious, however, was writing from Isfahan the following year, 5.10.1696:¹

"There is not a word, nothing mentioned, of any war against the Turks. . . ."

In Europe, in fact, at this juncture the restless Turkish military machine was again at work and the European states strongly reacting to it, having learnt from the campaign of 1683 that combination could lead to success. After the death of Sultan Ahmad IV in 1695 his successor, Sultan Mustafa II, totally defeated an Austrian army and raised the siege of Temesvar. On the other hand all the Morea as far as Corinth was won by Morosini and the Venetians. In 1697 Prince Eugene of Savoy was in command and the Turks defeated. But it was not until 1699, while the Pope's legate was at the Persian Court, that hostilities ended for a time with the treaty of Karlowitz which secured to Venice Dalmatia, Morea and the Ionian islands free from tribute, and to Austria almost half Hungary, and which was signed by the Turks with Austria, Venice, Poland and Russia.

From the pen of the Archbishop of Ancyra himself no account of the nature and upshot of his discussions with the Persian Wazirs on the subject of the Turks has been noticed: but the Memorial, which Bishop Elias of Isfahan handed to the Doge and Senate of Venice at his audience, 4.3.1702,² opens with the words:

"As to the motive the king of Persia had in paying extraordinary honour to Monsignor
 "the Archbishop of Ancyra . . . by according him three public audiences, gala banquets
 "and two private interviews with the chief Wazir, called 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, it was mainly
 "because of the inclination, which they had at the time, of engaging in open warfare with
 "the Turks, it being already 4 or 5 years since they (the Persians) gave some token of this
 "in the difficulties they were making over restoring to the Sultan of Turkey the town of
 "'Basra, captured from the rebellious Arab prince, Shaikh Mān'a.

"For that reason both the king and 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh showed themselves inclined to enter into the
 "league, which they had been pressed to join for many years past by various letters from the Serene
 "Republic as well, and as they did to the latest pressing requests from the Emperor, to
 "which, in the reply brought by me and translated by me in Vienna, they (the Persians)
 "reciprocated in repeated and express statements their friendship, unity" (of policy) "and
 "unalterable alliance.

"2. In their haste to give notice of this their goodwill to the potentates allied against the
 "Turks, and not yet having any sure news of the conclusion of peace, and wishing to fore-
 "stall the ratification, on the persuasion of my lord of Ancyra they dispatched a courier in
 "advance, a young German servant of the Archbishop of Ancyra himself, with letters
 "from the Archbishop to the Sovereign Pontiff, to the Emperor, to the most Serene
 "Republic, to the king of Poland and to the Czar of Muscovy together with copies of a

¹ Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., *S.N.R.* II, p. 173.

² *S.N.R.*, II, p. 414.

"letter addressed by 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh to the Archbishop ratifying in writing some points "which they had settled between them in the private interviews—though still in general "terms, the more detailed explanation of these being left to me, as I was to follow with the "letters from the Shah . . . that is to say, they protested themselves to be friends with the "friends and enemies to the enemies" (of the European confederate princes) "and that as "a preliminary effecting of this alliance they (the Persians) desired that the said potentates "should send them some engineers, artillerymen and artificers¹ expert in the methods of "making mines, fortifications, cannons, bombs and other implements of war. But the "first of these letters having fallen into the hands of Prince Boris Galitzin, the chief minister "of the Czar of Muscovy, during the absence of the Czar from Moscow, all the other letters "were destroyed by the same prince, who was greatly incensed at the detention in Persia "of their ambassador at Isfahan for having threatened the king and Court of Persia with "unusual demands and some kind of insult in shouting during a public audience.² So "the commission, with which I was charged in regard to the explanation and execution of "these terms was nothing else than to signify their (the Persian) inclination at the then "juncture to enter into an offensive and defensive league and that, when I was returning" (to Persia) "or anyone else in my stead, we should have been pleased to take with us such "officers, in order to assist such a resolution.

"(3). The Archbishop of Ancyra proposed both to the Shah as also to 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh "various other ways and means for the intended alliance, which were very important, i.e." (enquiring) "whether they would come to an understanding over helping one another "reciprocally with men and money, and whether they would not desire in the Persian Gulf "some assistance in ships, with which they could make powerful diversions and advan- "tageous conquests of territory too, in the direction of Mecca [*? sic*, Mokha], Basra and "other ports of Arabia. At first they appeared very set on these proposals; but, when it "came later to considering a contribution to the cost of the armament and maintenance of "that fleet, nothing was settled in this respect, as too nothing was paid in advance for the "journey expenses of the engineer officers desired: all they did was to promise that on their "arrival they would be placed on a regular salary, and compensated for all their expenses "incurred on their journeys. . . .

". . . (6). . . . As to the intention to make an alliance, which I was to communicate "here and which had been similarly notified in the letters sent in advance and stopped in "Moscow, seeing that peace has been concluded with the Turks (even before that intention "was determined in Isfahan) it does not appear to me necessary at present to ask for a reply "to it, until perhaps some other motive arise. . . ."

[For a detailed explanation of the reference, as a motive of self-interest for Persia in making an alliance with the European states, here used by Bishop Elias to the Persians making difficulties about restoring Basra to the Turks, the reader should turn to the section of this work dealing with the Residence at Basra and its vicissitudes, where passages from the *Chronicle* kept by the Carmelites at that mission are quoted. Here it may be stated that

'between March and September 1694 the Arab chieftain Mān'a, seeing the weakness of the "Turks besieged and took Basra from them: he ruled it for two years peacefully to general "satisfaction: then after March 1697 Mulla Farajullah, chief of the Persian district of Hawa- "izeh, with a larger following surrounded Basra and expelled Shaikh Mān'a, handing over "the town towards the end of that year to 'Ali Mardan Khan sent from Isfahan to govern it "by the Shah. Till September 1700 'Ali Mardan Khan and his successor, Ibrahim Khan, "governed Basra well, but a certain Daud Khan then sent proved a craven, the Arab tribes "from the surrounding districts gathered for an attack and, although he had a force of

¹ History repeating itself: 100 years previously Shah 'Abbas I had pressed for these, and did not receive them.

² This apparently trifling dispute over diplomatic procedure, which has been already related, might thus have had consequences for the allies in Europe in preventing them from knowing the willingness of Persia to make common cause, had it not been that the treaty of Karlowitz was concluded that same year.

'6,000 [? *sic*] Persian soldiers, they evacuated the town on the approach of a Turkish force, 'it being surrendered to a Turkish official 9.3.1701.']¹

The ground for influencing the Persian Court was not left undisputed to the Archbishop of Ancyra, for in one of his letters he referred to a Turkish ambassador being, or having been, in the country: and a sheet headed 'Nouvelles de Perse ecrites a Spahan', 19.11.1700,² by Bishop Pidou of Baghdad relates that:

"a Turkish envoy arrived here some few days ago who, according to what is said, is to demand Basra back from the Persians and what they have got out of it for the past three years that they took from the Arabs. I think they have got nothing out of it, as they have had no trade for the past five years, the town having been almost continually blockaded by the Arabs who for the past 3 months have been besieging it. In my opinion the Persians would have done better not to meddle with it, in order not to give any opportunity for chicanery to the Turks, who only seek to pick a quarrel with them; but I understand it was the Khan of Hawaizeh who on an opportunity drove out the Arabs and afterwards offered it to the Persian king, who accepted the place only to hand it back to the Turkish Sultan. . . ."

It will not take up much space to follow the Archbishop of Ancyra from Bandar 'Abbas which, he wrote,

"I left indebted for 2,700 rupees, which I have paid here in Surat together with another 2,000 rupees spent because of the tyranny of these Muhammadans: all this money I have settled by the sale of the presents" (from the Pope) "intended for the Great Mogul"

to Surat where, after he had pontificated and said the other two Masses on Christmas night 1700, he had an attack—so he himself wrote, 1.1.1700, "of semi-apoplexy with fever and repeated syncope". By the 3rd January 1701, the quondam fifth duke of St. Elia, Archbishop of Ancyra, was dead at the age of 58, unaware, presumably, that his uncle Pope Innocent XII had predeceased him by a few months.

"When dead, he was found to possess in money 3 sequins and 20 rupees—which was insufficient to bury him: and he left 2,348 rupees of debts. . . . Four horses were sold, 875 rupees: and he left some objects with gold and silver flowers presented to him by the king of Persia and an organ, which after a few days was sold for 500 rupees. . . ."³

But, though impoverished financially, he was most generous—he had taken out five Carmelites and three seculars with him to Persia:

"for two years I have maintained three missionaries of the Archbishop, whom he left. He said that the Sacr. Congregation would settle in its annual allowances"

had written the Carmelite Vicar Provincial from Isfahan 15.1.1700:⁴ and to India five Franciscans for China recommended to him by Cardinal Sacripante, as well as two French priests of the Bishop of Baghdad who could not pay for them,

¹ Here it might be added that the Turkish authorities at this period gave particular trouble to missions: the Capuchins in 1697 had to go about dressed as 'Doctors of Medicine', while the Catholics of Baghdad, accused before Turkish magistrates of having changed their religion, were fined 700 scudi (*S.N.R.*, II, *post* p. 200). At Basra in 1703 orders for the destruction of the Carmelite church arrived from Constantinople, and the sole Religious was turned out of the Residence, which on his death in 1707 was appropriated by the Turks: only in 1714 was a Religious sent from Persia to reopen it, and then the local Pasha would not act on orders from the Porte, so that it was 23.1.1715 before it was reopened to public worship (*S.N.R.*, III, pp. 77-8). and see details in section of this work dealing with the Residence at Basra.

² *S.N.R.* II, p. 380.

³ See letter of Francis Mary of S. Sirus, Shiraz, 13.5.1701, O.C.D. 238 g, in biographical section under Fr. Peter Paul of S. Francis, for further details.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 538, p. 455.

"all of whom he was feeding and providing with transport. . . ."

Hardly had that Papal representative left Persia than another arrived. A secretarial minute in the Sacr. Congregation recorded, 12.1.1699,¹

"the Capuchin Fathers having represented the need of a letter of recommendation to the king of Persia, so that they may be able to live and work in his kingdom, and not be impeded under pain of punishment. A present to the Shah is needed in such a case, and money for his officials, also letters to the king of Poland and the Emperor. Orders passed: let 150 scudi in all be given. . . ."

Thereupon, 24.1.1699, a Brief from Pope Innocent XII was addressed to Shah Sultan Husain² by the hands of Fr. Felix Maria of Sellano, who was mentioned therein, asking that:

"Since . . . it is of the greatest concern that all, who proceed to very extensive dominions and choose there to delay for a space, shall enjoy that peace and security which it is right to expect under the rule of a just and very kindly prince, it is certainly fitting that the Order of the Brothers Minor of S. Francis, called Capuchins, shall have such a wish gratified inasmuch as being men who, not for . . . any desire of earthly lucre, which they have voluntarily and solemnly renounced, but in order that they may indicate in sincerity and humbleness of heart the right way which leads to God through the light of Catholic truth, have undertaken to penetrate this most excellent part of the world. We therefore, who by reason of Our office are now and ought to be solicitous for the spiritual progress of souls, rightly, as is proper, discerning Your perspicuous sagacity, beg of You pressingly that You be pleased to bestow on the aforesaid Capuchins the free power of remaining in the districts subject to your sway, but especially in Ganjeh and Georgia, and of performing there all those (duties) which concern the sacred ministry of the mission in their private houses or churches. That supported by Your authority they may the more energetically apply themselves to their duty We likewise entreat of You that in no wise will You suffer them or any of those same Christian faithful whatsoever coming together for the sake of religious worship to be disturbed or in any way at all molested by Your subjects, but rather that You will curb undue attempts of that kind by the threatening of severe punishments. (Our) beloved son from the aforementioned Order of Capuchins, Felix Maria da Sellano, to whom We greatly desire that You will graciously listen when he is discoursing about Our Pontifical regard towards You, will explain in more detail Our mind. . . ."

A minute in the Sacr. Congregation, dated 4.5.1699,³ mentions that the Capuchin Fr. Felix Mary had just been sent back to Georgia from Rome with a letter from the Pope to the Shah, so that he might obtain greater liberty for his Order to have houses and churches there (at that time, as already noted, the Capuchin Fathers and Catholics at Tiflis were being grievously persecuted by an Armenian Vartapet sent there from Echmiadzin): while, writing 9.3.1699⁴ to the Cardinal Prefect, the Archbishop of Pisa stated that the Grand Duke of Tuscany was going to send a communication to the Shah and

"also verbally urge on some Persian merchants at Leghorn to indicate to the Shah the desire the Grand Duke has of seeing the Capuchin missionaries re-established in that country, with freedom for the exercise of their functions in their churches."

(Fr. Felix Maria from Sellano later informed the Sacr. Congregation that the Grand Duke's letter to the Shah had been "written in golden ink and enclosed in a very fine purse."⁵) In

¹ S.R., vol. 532, p. 23.

⁴ S.N.R., II, p. 236.

² Arch. Secr. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, 82, p. 148.

³ S.R., vol. 533, p. 58.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 238.

another communication, 22.9.1700,¹ Fr. Felix Maria referred to himself as an "ambassador with letters from the Pope against my will". However, he faithfully carried out the ceremonial contingent on the office:

"The new ambassador, Fr. Felix Mary, the Capuchin, an Italian from Perugia, aged 43, "tall and rather imposing, made his entry into the city the day before yesterday" (17.11.1700) "in the afternoon. A Breton captain, whom he brought with him, marched in front and "was followed by two banners, one of the Pope, the other of the Emperor. They were "followed by four or five musketeers with whom his Excellency rode between some footmen "garbed in red-flowered gold brocade with their hats trimmed with gold ribbons. I followed "him alone having behind me an interpreter, after whom there came two and two some "merchants from Marseilles and a Gascon, the Fr. Prior of the Carmelites from the convent "[? sic] at Julfa . . . the Portuguese (Augustinian) Prior with three of his Religious, two "Armenian priests, four Capuchins and his companions. The cavalcade was closed by "English cavaliers, well mounted, five other footmen, well dressed, and four white horses "led by the hand, and two torch-bearers in Persian style. It is said that this ambassa- "dor is bringing letters to the Shah from the Pope, the Emperor and the Republic of "Venice and Grand Duke of Tuscany, and that the merchants from Marseilles and two "Capuchins, one of whom is a Milanese, were bringing the letters in question, and entered "with him and were accommodated on four stools" (i.e. at the audience). "Among other "speeches the Shah, after having been informed about the health of the Pope and the "Emperor, asked the ambassador² about the news there was of peace with the Turks, to "which the ambassador replied that peace had been made but not yet ratified and that it "was not thought likely to last . . ."

was the account furnished by Mgr Pidou de St. Olon, Bishop of Baghdad, in his "Nouvelles de Perse escrites de Spahan".³

* * * * *

* * * *

Now it becomes necessary to turn back to the previous year, 1699, when the Bishop of Isfahan, although it was less than three years since his consecration and though the Apostolic Visitor, the Archbishop of Ancyra, was still in Isfahan, decided to leave for Rome. In the numerous and verbose letters, reports and memorials, written by Bishop Elias of S. Albert after his arrival in Europe—from which copious extracts will have to be quoted because, while ever repeating and enlarging on some points, he had a habit of introducing new material and interesting detail into each separate one—three grounds appear to have determined him to undertake this journey: the relief of his serious financial difficulties: some anxiety for his own safety added to the realization of the bitter dislike he personally had aroused among an influential section of the Armenians of Julfa, where he lived: and, lastly, a desire to bring more force to bear on the Armenians in Europe by the sovereigns of Catholic Christendom as one means of enforcing submission to Rome of the bulk of the population of Julfa. Firstly, as to the financial motive for what otherwise might seem strange desertion of his post it will be recalled that the bishopric had been filled by the nomination of Fr. Elias largely because of an offer by the Sharimans to finance the bishopric and endow it. After the expulsion from Julfa, 2.8.1695,⁴ as a minute in the secretariat of the Sacr. Congregation de Prop. Fide states:

"Fr. Elias sets forth that, having been expelled from Julfa with his Religious . . . he "remains without any allowance for his maintenance which the brothers Shariman, mer- "chants of Julfa, engaged to provide him, but they . . . are constantly harassed to pay

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 378.

² The Turkish word *Ilchi* is used.

³ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 380.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 521, p. 288.

“large sums of money to the king of Persia and his ministers, merely on religious grounds: “it does not appear reasonable to force them to pay the maintenance allowance, to burden “them more grievously, with the risk of chilling them in their Faith. . . . He begs your “Eminences to assign him some annual allowance to live with the decorum due to his rank “for the common weal of the faithful in the missions, and to give directions for his episcopal “clothing for celebrating to be provided for him . . .”

and 24.5.1698:¹

“ . . . As to the palace or bishop’s house, which they promised, it is impossible for them “to give possession of it until our re-establishment in Julfa, together with liberty for them- “selves and all our Catholics to declare that they belong to us . . .”

and this despite the fact that, in 1697 shortly after his consecration, he had written to the Pope with regard to the Shariman family who, on his recommendation for reward by the Holy See, had been accorded

“the immense favours and privileges of citizenship of the city of Rome and freedom of the “ports of Rome and Ancona, and other benefits both spiritual and temporal,”

that

“moved by an ineffable sentiment of gratitude, in proof of their devotion ever more intense “to the Apostolic See, they have increased the fund to be assigned first for our Residence at “Julfa, which has been begun, and then for the bishopric of Isfahan to the extent of an “annual yield of about 30 Tumans, i.e. about 420 scudi. . . .”²

But from almost the beginning the five brothers failed to make good their promises, as Bishop Elias showed in his memorial to the Cardinal Prefect while still in Rome in 1703:³

“From the time of my being appointed bishop” (1694) “there had been promised me an “annual stipend of 30 Tumans by the five brothers Shariman, who among themselves had “agreed upon the contributions they arranged to make: to this is to be added what had been “voluntarily offered by their sister and others well disposed: so the total was raised to about “500 scudi.

“After 1½ years—I do not remember exactly—they began to mix up in this some of the “income from a certain bath (Hammam) left by the dead son of one of them out of his “maternal estate for the Residence of our Fathers in Julfa: and from about the same time, “when the eldest of them, worn out with old age, distributed his property among his sons “and daughters, retaining for himself a portion barely sufficient for him to live, the promised “stipend and maintenance began to fail me as regards that (fifth) share: so that, as the “hoped-for allowance from the Sacr. Congregation of 100 scudi did not reach me, I was “compelled to have recourse to the heads of our Order to allow me to take advantage of our “Residence at Julfa, acquired by me previously, until from elsewhere better provision had “been made for me. But after the fifth year I was scarcely able to obtain anything from “the four other Sharimans, then from three of them, and at length from none of them, as “they all protested that they were no longer able to continue the amount of the contribution “in question, since they had become bankrupt by very many losses and trials. . . . There is “a total of at least 150 Tumans due, i.e. 2,250 scudi, reckoning the Tuman at 14 scudi “only. . . .”

In 1699 his observations⁴ to the Cardinal Prefect were put thus:

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 133.

² *Idem*, p. 178.

³ *Idem*, p. 348.

⁴ Bishop Elias, 14.6.1699, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 264.

"As to the assignment made to us by the Sharimans of 30 Tumans (five of which belong to our Residence at Julfa substituted for the income from a hammam given to it before my appointment to the bishopric) their intention appears to have always been that it should be perpetual, if the maintenance of this mission with the preaching, schools, etc., in the Armenian language should become permanent. . . . This income is now being paid to us by hand, each of the five Sharimans contributing his portion¹ (they are talking of making the assignment perpetual out of their private monies deposited by them in Venice, according to what one of them has already made me write in his will, and I hope the others will do so. . . .)"

Next year the acting Vicar Provincial, Fr. Basil, was explicit:²

"We used to receive great financial help from the Sharimans, but all is finished now. It will be much indeed if we can retain their sons: as to the money we no longer hope, and on this point we have recourse to the charity of the Sacr. Congregation for the mission at Julfa, which is most necessitous. If we had the wherewithal to live, your lordship should believe that it would be very flourishing. The Sharimans said before they became Persians" (i.e. Muslims) "that they no longer wanted to contribute to the maintenance of Mgr Elias and so, if the Sacr. Congregation send him back as we desire, it should provide him with a salary proportionate to his position."

Regarding the second motive for his journey, the author of the *Vita P. F. Elia a S. Alberto* mentions that he, Lay Brother Francis Mary of S. Sirus, after the return of Bishop Elias to Julfa in 1697

"slept with a loaded gun in a small room near to the Bishop for fear of an attempt on the latter's life,"³

such was the enmity of many schismatics: and Bishop Elias himself informed the Sacr. Congregation, 26.9.1702:⁴

". . . it was recommended to me, at whom our adversaries appeared particularly to aim in this fierce persecution, to *withdraw*. . . ."

By October 1699 that Austrian Fr. Conrad, Vicar Provincial, who had been hastily dispatched in 1697 to Rome by Bishop Elias with previous replies of Shah Sultan Husain on the occasion of the readmission of the Carmelites to Julfa, had not returned from Europe, although the Sacr. Congregation were actively trying to expedite his departure (the Archbishop of Seleucia, Nuncio in Vienna, writing to Mgr Fabroni, secretary of the Sacr. Congregation, 16.5.1699:⁵

"immediately the last letter from your Illustr. lordship of the 25th April concerning Fr. Conrad of the Assumption . . . reached me, I had him summoned, in order to learn from him the impediment which his superiors were placing in the way of his journey to Persia . . . and I told him of the order which I had from the Sacr. Congregation to see that . . . his journey should not be impeded . . .")

and, though this was followed by another letter of 12.9.1699⁶ from the Nuncio reporting: "Fr. Conrad of the Assumption has left safely for the mission in Persia", no trace in the records has been observed of that Religious being once more at Isfahan. There were, however, other

¹ This statement in 1699 seems contradictory of that made in 1703 above

² Fr. Basil of S. Charles, 2.2.1700, *S.R.*, vol. 538, p. 407.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 342.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 259.

³ O.C.D. 320 e.

⁶ *Idem*, p. 285.

Carmelites in Persia available to carry dispatches to Europe. But the colour afterwards given to his action by the Bishop of Isfahan himself was as follows :¹

“ . . . It happened that to the letters from the king of Persia there were added commissions of great moment with regard to the confederacy with the Christian princes against the common enemy, on account of which the king of Persia pressed the Archbishop of Ancyra to return (to Europe) with the replies, refusing to allow him to pass on to India unless he should fulfil his mission here. I was proposed, as having the same kind of function and thus possessing as it were the like authority for such an office. For, in order to forestall the ratification of peace the Shah had ordered the messenger, sent in advance to the Christian princes so that they should be forewarned of a bearer to follow later with the royal letters, to explain their purport and other business to be settled by his authority. But this messenger was robbed and stripped, his letters being carried off and kept back by the Court of Muscovy: and, if by God’s favour the negotiations for the alliance could have attained their objective and become effectual, it would have gained us the utmost goodwill and influence with the Shah and the Persian Court, making for the safer propagation of the Christian Faith. . . . ”

Elsewhere² he had written of himself as having come to Rome to represent:

“the very urgent needs of his oppressed Catholic flock, of all the Christians of Persia in danger, and of his own person, abandoned in the midst of such great hardships, which have obliged him, in order to seek the most efficacious remedies, to profit by the opportunity . . . to come to these parts with letters and commissions with which he has been charged by the king of Persia. . . . ”

Having appointed as his Vicar General Fr. Antonio Desterro, Prior of the Augustinian Hermits in Isfahan,³ he set off, 14.10.1699,

“having quitted Isfahan at a juncture of extreme misery for our Catholic flock, in order not to burden it still more I contented myself with very small travelling money, believing that I should be able to do the journey in six or seven months . . . ”⁴

He was accompanied by the Carmelite Fr. Antony Mary and some servants and by a Capuchin Father and Jesuit Lay Brother, and a Georgian

“nobleman named Gaspar, who had been deprived of all his property because of his courageous stand for the Faith, along with his son who was to be entrusted to the Sacred Congregation for education, and by some Armenian traders, impoverished and risking to lose their religion there in Isfahan, who helped me without any pay throughout the journey with the balance of their money, though in part I recompensed them out of the gift of 300 ‘ungari’ from his Majesty the Emperor. . . . ”⁵

Instead of taking the route via Baghdad to Aleppo or via Basra and then across the desert direct to Aleppo and Alexandretta, whence he would have reached Genoa or Marseilles in a few months, the Bishop of Isfahan chose to go by the long overland route through Muscovy, with the consequence that like his Carmelite predecessors on their first expedition and Fr. John Thaddeus later he became involved in serious trouble and long delay in that schismatic land. This journey of Bishop Elias proved to be a series of mistakes and fruitless halts from beginning to end, and in the case of an emissary entrusted with political negotiations and

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 543, *post* p. 200, 26.9.1702.

³ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 421, letter of Fr. Antonio Desterro, 5.4.1702.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 539, p. 298, Bishop Elias, Warsaw, 4.6.1701.

² *Idem*, vol. 541, p. 455, 13.6.1702.

⁵ *Idem*, undated, 1703?, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 348.

on 18.5.1701 they entered Warsaw, where Gaspar the Georgian died. Thence the Bishop of Isfahan wrote, 4.6.1701, to the Sacr. Congregation:¹

"After many vexations and mishaps—more than ever Ulysses suffered—which have befallen me on this journey, when I had at last reached Leopoli, I was much comforted by a most welcome letter from the most rev. the Apostolic Nuncio in the kingdom of Poland, by which he informed me of the fatherly solicitude which had moved your Eminences and the Sacr. Congregation to be pleased to enlist the authority of this most noble king (of Poland) in order to obtain from the Grand Czar of Muscovy my liberation from that country; although after four months' detention in Moscow I had then already been sent away from it, but with orders to be made to wander about the streets of Kiev for another two months. . . ."

In Warsaw

"being already in debt for money borrowed from the servants, and not having the wherewithal to clothe myself and continue on the remainder of the peregrination"

Bishop Elias took from the Nuncio an advance on his allowances due, "228 thalers, 2 pengos, 12 grosch", the equivalent then of 200 scudi.

In his address² to the Cardinals of the Sacr. Congregation (26.9.1702) the Bishop of Isfahan claimed:

". . . Although I was unable to arrive until peace had already been concluded and ratified, none the less the grace of God inspired my efforts and I did not desist at each one of the Courts of the Catholic princes, to which I was the envoy, to do something for the protection both of the Christian and, in particular, of the Catholic religion, and for its adversaries to be restrained, as is patent from the letters of the king of Poland, by which I obtained authority for there to be taken away from a certain Armenian schismatic the letters which he had obtained in the name of the king of Poland, and with which he had gone off, plotting no doubt something against the Catholics: and I obtained that the protecting of the Catholic missionaries and their adherents (in Persia) should be the subject of recommendation by the king of Poland. . . ."

Via Cracow (17.8.1701) Vienna was reached, 30.8.1701: and Bishop Elias continued in the letter quoted above:

"as (is patent) also from a transcript of the letters of the Prince of Fundi, written in the name of the Emperor, to the grand Wazir of Persia, with a like recommendation of protection" (for the Catholics in Persia) "and with information regarding their present condition . . . copies of these letters I have attached to this memorial for your more accurate information . . .",

while the Memorial of 4.3.1702 to the Doge³ of Venice explains:

"5. In view of the change which, during the lengthy period that I had been on the journey, might have come about in the intentions of the Shah of Persia (as the Turks were in the meanwhile giving out that they had retaken Basra) the Emperor deemed it advisable not to reply himself for the time being to the letter from the Shah, but to have a letter written by a chief minister of his own and president of his council of war, the Prince of Fundi, to the grand Wazir 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, in which the expressions (of amity) were reciprocated and the alliance ratified: in it he (the Prince of Fundi) asked to be better

¹ S.R., vol. 539, p. 298.

² *Idem*, vol. 543, *post* p. 200.

³ S.N.R., II, p. 414.

"informed as to their (the Persians') present frame of mind and inclination, by which time
"I, having gone on to Venice and Rome and dispatched my business there too, or some other
"person in my stead, could return (to Persia) for the surer accomplishment of the favours
"desired. That letter along with another from the king of Poland of like tenor I have
"addressed by a Georgian servant of ours to the Vicar Provincial of our missions in Persia,
"recommending him to the care of his excellency the ambassador of the republic of Venice
"in Constantinople, whither he (the Georgian) set out in company of the English
"ambassador. . . ."

From Vienna, 12.12.1701, Bishop Elias reached Venice by 28.12.1701: and there, so the address to the Cardinals went on,

"Next at Venice I obtained that the church of the Armenians, where previously the
"heretical rite had been followed, should be administered according to the Catholic observ-
"ance and that the schismatic Armenians trading there should be warned threateningly
"that any loss which in future they might presume to inflict on their Catholic compatriots
"would be avenged by the loss of their own goods and lives. I negotiated all these matters
"at a meeting held at the Courts mentioned with Apostolic Nuncios. . . ."

The text of Bishop Elias' Memorial to the Most Serene Prince in the

"excellent College, together with a more detailed explanation of various points summarily
"touched in the brief harangue delivered on his presenting the letter from the Persian
"king. . . ."

and subscribed:

"The most devoted chaplain and obliged client of your Serenity and your exalted Council"

as already been reproduced in the appropriate sections of this narrative, with the exception of
1) a somewhat ingenuous remark that:

"in the letter of the king of Persia brought by me, there being no mention of anything
"except the favours granted us in consideration of the recommendations made (by the
"Republic), . . . an expression of thanks for the kindly relations can be put off till there is
"reason to write again . . ."

and (b) an appeal to the Republic on behalf of his Armenian protégés, the Sharimans,
several of whom at the time were in business in Venice:

"to deign of its sovereign clemency to accord them some benign protection and favour to
"relieve them in their oppressed condition . . . as in some way by my efficacious persuasion
"I have been the cause of their investing in the banks of this capital."

But his separate letter to the Doge, dated 4.3.1702,¹ merits quotation, too:

"Most Serene Prince,

"I Fr. Elias of S. Albert, Bishop of Isfahan, Discalced Carmelite, having received very
"marked favours from his Majesty the king of Persia through the very benevolent recom-
"mendations of your Serene Highness, in sign of gratitude am bound to contribute whatso-
"ever might be of influence in the service of religion, which is so greatly desired by your
"Serene Highness, as well as to the advantage of the most Serene Republic.

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 414.

"Therefore I may be permitted to make it publicly known that the schismatic Armenian merchants of Julfa are continually harassing their compatriots who have become Catholics, and in particular have recently accused of *lèse-majesté* those who gave the money for public use, inflicting many losses. This causes these people to hold aloof . . . and stops the coming of other rich merchants, who would betake themselves hither to enjoy this most serene clime. It is not for me to suggest to the particularly great wisdom of your Serene Highness remedies to avert disorders of this nature, so prejudicial to the public weal, i.e. for the leading men from the schismatical party of Julfa who are residing in this capital to be summoned by the Supreme Court and threatened that, if they cause their Catholic compatriots in Persia to suffer, they will render account for it with their lives and their property and, in fine, by instilling fear into them to ward off an evil which concerns the worship of God and the advantage of this mother-country. . . ."

It was 1.4.1702 when the Bishop reached Rome, already 2½ years since he had left Isfahan. In the first of his long written representations—that considered in the session of the Sac. Congregation on 13.6.1702¹—after referring to the "commiseration shown by His Holiness to his representations in various audiences and details given of oppression by the Muslim" rulers of Persia of the Christian and other subject minorities as one chief reason why he had come to invoke intervention, Bishop Elias turned to his personal financial position, which has already been disclosed in this narrative. He urged that he had never received more than 100 scudi per annum. (In a minute in the secretariat of the Sac. Congregation on the Bishop's letter from Warsaw of 4.6.1701 it is mentioned that he had been paid "100 scudi for one year only, notwithstanding that the provision for bishops, who have no other revenues assigned them, is usually 200 scudi yearly".) He complained that on his prolonged journey he had been obliged to borrow money, hoping to repay it from that annual provision now accumulated and due for several years: and further he had been hoping to find in Rome ready the episcopal vestments for ordinary wear and for ecclesiastical functions, which Innocent XII had assigned for him. "But," he went on,

"during the two months since my arrival I have been unable to obtain up till now anything more than the ration of bread and a jar of wine daily, and 7½ scudi monthly."

On this application the instructions given were brief:

"Let 10 scudi monthly be assigned to him, but let him depart" (i.e. to his diocese) "as speedily as may be."

In Latin, 26.9.1702,² Bishop Elias again tackled the Cardinals of the Sac. Congregation, setting forth the three main needs which had led him to make the journey, which (as already quoted verbatim in various parts of this narrative) were given as (a) the opportunity of appealing personally to the Catholic sovereigns for their intervention against the machinations of the schismatics; (b) intervention by the Holy See and Christian princes to stay the Persian Court from the forced conversion to Islam of the Christians (including Armenians) and other minorities; (c) the settlement of an annual grant for the Bishop of Isfahan, since the Sharimans were no longer able to provide it.

Then he remarked, somewhat vaguely, with regard to his return to Persia that

"as already from the time of our departure there had ceased to exist the reason for war" (i.e. by Persia against Turkey) "which the occupation of Basra chiefly furnished, and hence everything had been brought back to a peaceable state of relations, it appears that what was then required is no longer to be looked for at present: until a reply on these matters arrives from the Persian king or at least a letter from our (Carmelite) Fathers, to whose

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 339, and *S.R.*, vol. 541, p. 455.

² *S.N.R.*, II, p. 343, and *S.R.*, vol. 543, *post* p. 200.

"care the letters" (from the king of Poland and the Emperor, reciprocating the desire for amity, and asking for information as to the situation from the Persian standpoint) "were directed, together with an indication of the success they have met, I am putting off asking for my dispatch from Rome; since then with letters more suited to the present position of affairs from His Holiness and from the Emperor and the republic of Venice already promised . . . it seems it can be arranged with some hope of bringing an amelioration to the (existing) grievous state of affairs rather than with the danger of involving them in greater desperation. . . ."

Finally he returned to the subject of his personal needs:

"I shall avail myself of a more opportune occasion to represent what I consider ought to be provided for my maintenance in the bishopric in future . . .";

meanwhile he asked for there to be supplied, as formerly promised, and dispatched an outfit of vestments, books and other necessities for pontificals: for the satisfaction of his debts contracted on his departure from Persia and during the last 2½ years, and expenditure on dispatching a messenger from Vienna to Isfahan with letters for the Shah: for suitable entertainment and maintenance,¹ and

"for the convenience of a four-wheeled carriage or cart, which it is usual to allow bishops from abroad, for want of which so far I have been unable to visit your Eminence as well as many of my patrons and inform them about affairs, as also to be unable to visit churches out of devotion. . . ."

On the one hand Bishop Elias was evidently discontented at the reception given to his requests and arguments, on the other the Sac. Congregation displeased at so protracted absence from his diocese and of opinion that the Shariman family should be obliged to keep to their promise to maintain a bishop appointed at their instance, and that they were rich enough to do this; for in this letter the bishop observed that on his journey the Nuncios at Warsaw, Vienna, Venice

"used to assure me . . . that I was eagerly awaited in Rome, and would be received with favour, as in truth I experienced on my first arrival. But now, I do not know because of what change in the state of affairs I am no longer regarded with the same eyes and I am questioned, as it were, here and there why have I come to eat the bread of idleness gratis. For what have I come? and why have I abandoned my flock . . .? your Eminence will overlook it if I state these matters with too great a feeling of bitterness. . . ."

To that application and *exposé* there is appended a minute by Cardinal Francesco Barberini dated 5.10.1702 and addressed to the Cardinal Prefect of the Sac. Congregation de Prop. Fide:

"The Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide having on the 26th September last left to the decision of Cardinal Fran. Barberini the petition of Mgr Elias, Bishop of Isfahan, to the effect that he should be furnished with the 100 scudi a year, claimed by him as assigned to him after he was made bishop, for the period of nine years, of which he has taken 100 from the Sac. Congregation and 200 through the Nuncio in Poland all together so that there would remain in accordance with his claim some 600 scudi only due: and, as according to the decree of the Sac. Congregation the decision is to be regulated in proportion to the sums drawn on the 30 Tumans which the Sharimans undertook to provide, and the bishop is not able to recall precisely the time and sums paid him by

¹ In *S.N.R.*, II, p. 328, is a request to the Secretary of the Cong. to continue the "part" of the building he was occupying the past two months (i.e. the rent), and to remit his monthly allowance for the past three months.

"the said Sharimans up to his departure from his diocese—the Cardinal considers that, "if it be so approved by his Eminence the Cardinal Prefect, in addition to the 300 scudi "already received, the Bishop of Isfahan may be paid another 400 scudi, but without any "hope of obtaining a larger sum with the object of paying off entirely the debts which he "says that he has contracted both on the journey and during his stay in Rome.

"Then, as to the allowances to be given to the said prelate during the time that he may "stay in Rome, he desires that the 10 scudi monthly already assigned to him by the Sacr. "Congregation be increased; but, as the Cardinal 'proposer' has no status in that matter, "he leaves the request to the judgment of his Eminence the Cardinal Prefect. Regarding "the amounts to be paid him, after his return to his see, the view of the Cardinal 'proposer' "(which he leaves to the criticism of the Sacr. Congregation) would be that, while the "prelate remains in Rome, diligent search should be made in the Sacr. Congregation for "the letters written by the Sharimans in the years 1693 and 1694—those by which they "promised to pay 30 Tumans yearly to Mgr Elias provided that he be consecrated Bishop "of Isfahan—and that in regard to the fulfilment of such promises a letter be written to "Mgr the Nuncio in Venice to take steps to force the Sharimans residing there and very "rich to satisfy their indebtedness, if not in full, at least in part, and also that security (for "full payment) be sought. 5th October 1702 (sd.) Card. Franc Barberini."

On the 4th December 1702 the Secretary, Mgr Fabroni, noted that the Cardinal Prefect had approved all the above proposals. In the following year, in the session of the Sacr. Congregation, 30.4.1703,¹ it considered a long petition in Latin, addressed by Bishop Elias to Pope Clement himself, beginning:

" . . . Fr. Elias of S. Albert, Bishop of Isfahan, sets forth to Your Holiness how, having "tarried this year in Rome, he was expecting to receive from Persia some reply to the letter, "already 1½ years ago sent off from Vienna. . . ."²

He numbered three requests: *firstly*, he indicated the tenor of the replies to the letters brought from the Shah which it was important the Pope should send—the compliments and praise to be given, the warm recommendation of himself (the bishop) and all his flock, particularly of the Armenians in communion with the Holy See. The Christian princes, to whom the Shah had also sent letters by the Bishop, should show unanimity in commending to the Shah's benevolence and protection the Bishop and his flock: in particular the king of Portugal should be moved to write because, as his dominions were more nearly coterminous with those of the Shah, he pulled greater weight, as had been seen when the Portuguese ambassador intervened and helped the recovery of the residence of the Carmelites in Julfa. *Secondly*, he elaborated and detailed financial requirements to set the mission to the Armenians in particular, and that of the Carmelites in their various stations in Persia, on a solid footing: the other Orders working in Isfahan and Julfa are not mentioned as needing support:

"Travelling allowances for several companions of proved vocation and good repute offering "themselves for the Persian mission: and stipends paid in advance for several years, together "with a pledge of continuance later in accordance with needs . . . in the double church "and school at Julfa, one of the Armenian, the other of the Latin rite, together with the "Residence of his Order established by him; in the former of which daily the Divine office "with sung Mass and Catholic observance is celebrated by three priests and as many "clerics, and more than thirty scholars; in the latter besides private Masses daily, on Sundays "and feast-days solemn Masses with the Gregorian chant are celebrated (with travellers "passing and Religious arriving from elsewhere): at these usually a sermon in Armenian "was included, unless by reason of some festival occurring in the church of the Armenian "rite it was given there. There too Christian doctrine, grammar, controversy and the

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 545, p. 78.

² This petition would appear then to have been written in the latter half of 1702.

“rudiments of philosophy and theology are taught. On ferial days also the poor are collected for catechism, together with some distribution of alms. In winter time chiefly, when the peasants have no cultivation to do, they gather from all parts in the town: publicly too the sacraments, whatever they may be, are administered, the dead buried, etc. All of these occupations and duties certainly cannot be performed without the aid of at least two missionary Fathers, nor without the service of a cook and another servant for the cultivation of the garden and for discharging duties both at home and out of doors, and the upkeep of at least one horse, without which it would be no less serious than unbecoming for the Bishop to run about to the churches and other places of the mission of Isfahan and Julfa, several miles from his residence. Then, large as may be the stipend assigned to the above-mentioned Armenian Catholic priests and clerics by the Sharimans, they are able to obtain it with difficulty, and rarely the whole in full and at its due time. Then it very often fell to the bishop to provide it; but now that they are so much in want of it, much more does he have to divide with them the modest portion falling to his lot, just as also with the other Armenian clerics and monks, partly Catholics, partly well disposed not daring to profess Catholicism openly by fear of a more severe persecution and for lack of the necessary means of livelihood. Among them are some bishops and schoolmasters, supporting themselves apart from the schismatics in a very miserable way, who might be easily led to the open profession and preaching of the Catholic faith by the granting of some temporary assistance. There occurred too frequent arrivals from a distance of Europeans, both secular and missionaries, and the passage of foreigners, who had recourse to the bishop and invoked his aid in every adversity and need, since there is not at Isfahan any consul or head of a trading company of any Catholic nation, from whom as elsewhere in this way protection can be sought. Thus, besides the customary supply of funds for charity, receiving guests, clothing the ragged, making up shortage of journey money required, very frequently there is need of it for settling very troublesome and costly suits with the judges and notables and the king himself. In all of which that he has acted not illiberally your humble petitioner does not doubt that it has become known to the Sac. Congregation: and that it is not lacking at present can be testified by the mission at Tiflis in Georgia, particularly. So, from these details here represented without any hyperbole or exaggeration he leaves it to be carefully weighed by the supremely wise judgment of Your Holiness yourself, and of the Sac. Congregation, whether he will be able to continue all these duties and activities, or whether he can return to take them up once more without an equivalent provision of funds, seeing that with the flight of the benefactors the contribution of about 500 scudi annually covenanted by them formerly had gradually been changed, and at length had become completely deficient. *Thirdly*, he also respectfully begs for the episcopal vestments of the various ecclesiastical colours, pastoral staff, pontificals and one complete set of ordinary clothing, suitable for his state and order with which he can appear respectably in the presence of the said princes and of the king of the Persians himself: and also for some other books, scriptural, controversial, of sermons, on mathematics, and also instruments appertaining to astronomical subjects, images, rosaries and other things which cannot be obtained in Persia. “Finally, for the other missions of his Order in Persia—Isfahan, Shiraz, Basra, Gāmburūn, he humbly begs that provision be made for a larger number of missionaries, together with funds, for lack of which the port of Gāmburūn, to which ships of the Christians come, remains without its wonted mission of the Fathers: since in the other missions only two missionaries are posted to each, so that if one of them be away or be lacking, the other must remain alone and, if he be absent, the mission is abandoned, until after some years a reply comes from Rome and then the remedy can scarce make good the harm done. . . .”

Meanwhile the Sac. Congregation considered that the Bishop of Isfahan had been sufficiently long in Europe and were pressing him to return to his diocese: in the session of 23.11.1703 dinal Sacripante—

"reported having, in execution of the decree of the 13th October last, exhorted Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan to return without more delay to his post, when the said bishop exhibited some repugnance to doing so, because of lack of an emolument fitting for his maintenance. ". . . Wherefore it was decided that a letter be written to the Nuncio at Venice."¹

There is no indication that sufficient pressure could be brought, or was brought on the 'Counts' Shariman of Venice to contribute to the annual support of the Bishop of Isfahan: according to a letter of 1703² at least 2,250 scudi was then the amount outstanding and due from the family on this account: still in 1708 the Nuncio was writing to the Sacr. Congregation³ that he had "renewed pressure on the Sharimans and especially Markar, to continue to assist "the missionaries".

The 'fidus Achates' of Bishop Elias in Persia, Lay Brother Francis Mary of S. Sirus rejoined him in Rome, 22.12.1702, having returned from accompanying the Portuguese ambassador to the Indies: in his *Vita P. F. Elia* he stated that in 1703 occurred the great earthquake in Rome and the Pope bade Mgr Elias preach in the church of S. Mary Aegyptiaca to the Armenians: that on 31.5.1703 Pope Clement, who would have liked to retain the Bishop in a post in Rome, sent Mgr Elias with Mgr Philip Ellis, O.S.B. (? *sic*), to obtain information required for a beatification: that Pope Clement XI gave his reply for the Shah of Persia together with some gifts, 11.5.1704 [? *sic* 1705], and on the 22nd of that month bestowed a final blessing on the Bishop of Isfahan, who quitted Rome, 25.5.1705. The Pope had done all that was asked, and generously, in the way of recommending the Bishop of Isfahan: this was what he had addressed to Shah Sultan Husain, 17.2.1705:⁴

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. The letters, "filled and loaded with the highest expression of affection and Your excellent goodwill "towards the name and dignity of the Roman Pontiff which Your Highness had written "back to Innocent XII, of happy memory Our predecessor, We, who albeit by no merits "of Our own, but by the ruling of God, have been put instead in his place after his decease, "have received to the great gratification of Our heart, and We have had them faithfully "translated to Us.

"From them We have therefore learnt what courteous good offices at a sign from Our "dead predecessor You have caused to be paid to the late Peter Paul, formerly Archbishop "of Ancyra, to whom You showed Yourself complaisant in all those matters, which he "asked of You in the name of the Pope. Nor meanwhile was he greatly forced to labour "to exhort You to consolidate ever more surely the friendship and league of sentiments "and association which exists between You and the Christian princes and kings, since You "above all things wish it, and desire in particular to deserve well of and cultivate the "benevolence of the supreme prelate of the Universal Church. Now this Your noble will "and greatness of soul and Your propensity for all Christians above measure happen "welcomely to Us.

"For just as We see of what great importance it is to the Christian commonwealth that "You, a king truly outstanding in rank, power, wealth and the extent of Your realms and "subject peoples should be joined in Your inclinations with that commonwealth and with "those holding chief place in it, and should cherish a particular regard for the successors "of Blessed Peter, so We deem a great increase of Your glory to depend upon the fact of "the fame of Your name being spread beyond even the wide-stretched boundaries of the "kingdom of Persia and being received most freely by right even of treaty too and mentioned "with praise by foreign nations and distant peoples. As far as We are concerned, We "desire that You should be convinced that We have a mutual regard altogether well "disposed for You and desire nothing so much as that God, the author of all good things,

¹ S.R., vol. 546, p. 384.

² *Idem*, III, p. 323, 25.2.1708.

³ S.N.R., II, p. 348.

⁴ *Clementis XI P.P. Epistolae et Brevia Selectiora*, Rome, 1724.

"will fill you with the abundance of His gifts and, taking You by the hand, will lead You by the paths of justice to solid and lasting happiness.

"For the remarkable properties of Your mind are perceived by Us and endorsed by the testimony of many persons, but especially that truly royal equitableness joined to the highest intelligence, by means of which You understand that it is expedient that the faithful Christians inhabiting, or coming to, Your country should enjoy the protection of Your authority, in order that no violence or molestation shall be visited on them openly or privily, and with emphasis We beg of You to watch over this carefully, and to achieve this with all Your might.

"These letters of Ours will be brought to Your Highness by the venerable brother Elias, Bishop of Isfahan, Our high priest, highly approved and commended by Us on account of the faith, erudition and piety with which he is endowed, such as few are; and, as he has so highly (as is right) spoken about You not once only, so We are confident that he will report to You, and bear witness to You, with what fervour of apostolic charity We unremittingly send Our prayers up to God for real blessings for You!

"We have, however, considered it opportune to send him back at present to his place of residence, so that just there he may be found and settled for everything which concerns the safety, immunity and profit of the Christians there, and that he may besides apply his exertions in promoting the accomplishment of acts of mutual goodwill between us, and in transacting such business for Us as may occur there.

"We desire therefore that confidence be placed in the said Bishop when engaged in such things, both by the Christians who are committed to his own spiritual guidance, that they may constantly enjoy Your royal protection, and accordingly We once more and earnestly commend them likewise to You; while, however, through the Bishop We wish to have them warned that, save for their faith in God, they should take care not to depart from the respect and obedience due to Your authority, even indeed in the least.

"We are giving instructions for there to be taken to You on this opportunity certain small gifts from foreign parts worth consideration rather as curiosities than for their value, which We hope You will willingly accept, considering only Our affectionate regard from which they proceed. With all Our heart also We wish Your Highness lasting safety and before all else moreover the light of Divine grace.

"Given at S. Peter's, Rome, under the Fisherman's ring, the 18th day of February 1705 and the fifth year of Our Pontificate."

To Shah Sultan Husain the Pope had been lenient, to the point of silence, with regard to the schismatic Armenians: in the commendatory letters of the same date to the Emperor Leopold, the Doge of Venice and the Grand Duke of Tuscany he was more explicit, as for example in that to the Grand Duke Cosimo:

"Beloved son, greeting and the apostolic blessing. The things which Our venerable brother Elias, Bishop of Isfahan, recounted to Us some time ago regarding the truly deplorable state of the church of Isfahan and the nefarious attempt of the heretics, the Armenians in particular, to overthrow altogether the orthodox religion in Persia have, as was right proper, produced in Our mind really great anxiety. On this account, as far as the adversity of the present times permitted, We have benevolently granted him all the assistance and good offices which seemed fitting for repairing the harm done to the Faith and for the preservation and increase of Christian interests in those regions: and now that he is returning to his see We have very warmly recommended him to the king of the Persians whose letters he himself had formerly brought.

"But since this same venerable brother has placed, and to be sure with perfect justification, the greatest confidence in the piety of Your noble self, We pressingy beg of You to receive him, when he comes to You, with Your wonted kindness and freely to afford him everything which Your excellent judgment shall know to be to the advantage as well for the

"said Bishop as for the Catholics residing in that region, hoping that You will do this the more zealously and lavishly for Our sake, which certainly by the love simply of religion alone and by the incentive of charity You would have done. And We impart to Your noble self the Apostolic benediction permanently. Given . . . (as above) . . . the 18th day of February 1705. . . ."

There is in the archives of Propaganda Fide a letter to the Cardinal Prefect from Bishop Elias, dated Florence, 16.7.1705:¹

"I arrived here, 4.6.(1705) and immediately wrote to Leghorn to enquire whether the presents for the Shah of Persia, which I had suggested to Your Illustr. lordship, had reached there: the reply was in the negative. Meanwhile the Grand Duke sent to Pisa the letter from the king of Persia, to which he wants to reply, for it to be translated. I took advantage of this opportunity to go to Leghorn and once more to recommend the presents, when received, to the care of Count Wali Jan, son of Michael Shariman, according to the orders of your Illustr. lordship. I had left the note of it for your secretariat and forwarded it to the Dutch Company in Holland. Now that his Royal Highness has left his reply until his return, which was yesterday, I hear that there is still no news in Leghorn of the gifts. So once more I beg you urgently to see about this matter, so that I shall not be obliged to proceed without the necessary provision. On my arrival in Leghorn the other Armenians came to see me in the house of the Messrs. Shariman, and they showed that they were pleased with some of my talk, begging me to preach to them, but I refused, saying that it was not a place within my jurisdiction. . . ."

Another letter² shows that by 5.9.1705 Bishop Elias had recently arrived in Venice, and in the same year he was back at the Court of the Emperor, to obtain that sovereign's letter to the Shah.

All this effort was, however, bootless, as far as Bishop Elias was concerned and the continuance of work by him among the Armenians, for, as will be found related at greater length in the biographical section of this work, in 1706 he was in his native country and at the request of the dying Bishop of Antwerp he proceeded to take charge of that diocese until at the end of 1707 or early 1708 he travelled to Lisbon, whence he sailed with the royal fleet, 26.4.1708, for Goa. Having landed at Bahia on the coast of Brazil he had a seizure while pontificating at Mass in the Carmelite convent there and died, 3.11.1708.³ The Carmelite Fr. Dionysius of S. Brigid, on his way to Goa too, notified the Sacr. Congregation from Bahia some ten days later:⁴

". . . He landed here from the sea⁵ with his stomach out of order: despite all the diligence the doctors had he fell into a relapse and afterwards became paralysed and at length, 4.11.1708,⁶ passed from death to life. He made his will, leaving everything in my hands for the benefit of the mission and his new foundation in Julfa: and he gave me the commission to carry on in his name his mission to the Persian king and to hand over to that monarch the documents and gifts from the Sovereign Pontiff, the Emperor and other Christian princes. . . ."

Another Carmelite, previously in Persia,⁷ who was accompanying him, wrote from Lisbon to Rome:

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 469.

² and ⁶ This is the date given in the *Vita*, the 4th that by Fr. Dionysius.

³ *Idem*, p. 471.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 352, 15.11.1708.

⁵ The second part of the *Travels of a Carmelite*—a MSS. in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, L. 200, p. 148—viz. "in Germany, Holland, Portugal, thence to Brazil", by the Bishop's old companion and writer of the *Vita*, probably contains details of the Bishop's life and wanderings from 1705 till his death.

⁷ Fr. Fortunatus of the Angel Guardian, 12 3.1709, *S.R.*, vol. 567, p. 37.

"He died acclaimed as a saint . . . so that it was necessary to divide up his clothes to satisfy the violence of the devotion of the people there. The Archbishop and clergy wanted to have his corpse."

A list of the money and effects, mostly gold and silver articles, episcopal vestments, etc., as received from Mozambique is to be found in the Carmelite archives; but as to his will bequeathing them and his other personalty to the mission at Julfa occasion for reference will occur at a later stage in this narrative.

Like the first the third Bishop of Isfahan had died travelling to his diocese; he had been less than three years resident as its Ordinary: climatic conditions on the high plateau of Iran would have proved hard on a man of 65: it was over late for him to be returning. The reader will have noticed that the contribution made by Fr. Elias of S. Albert to the work of the Order in Persia, the direction in which his activities were bent from his first arrival, was radically different from that of his predecessors as vicars provincial in the previous hundred years. It is hardly too much to say that, from the time Fr. Elias of S. Albert had charge, the Carmelites became missionaries to the Armenians of Julfa, and ceased to work among the real Persians: even the century-old convent of the Order in the capital was allowed to become ruinous and deserted for the hospice at Julfa, and hardly a word is mentioned about the other missions in correspondence. But it is certain that the very numerous Armenian Uniat community at Julfa numbering several thousands in the middle of the eighteenth century, and the one thousand estimated as still in Persia today, and those portions of the community which migrated to Baghdad and Basra to become the nucleus of the Armenian Catholic colonies in the twentieth century so flourishing in these latter times were due to his persistence and tireless teaching and preaching—he and his collaborators, the Shariman family, were the real founders and organizers of the Uniates in the whole of that region. Only his methods were, as can be read from his letters, brusque and antagonizing: and he made mistakes, above all in trusting too much in the Shariman family to make provision for the bishopric, as also in founding the hospice at Julfa without assuring financial support for it.

* * * * *

* * * *

Apart from those of the Carmelite Bishop, the letters from the pens of members of the Order in or visiting Persia during this reign which have been preserved and afford material for the history of their work are much fewer in number than in earlier times—not above one hundred, and the majority are in the archives of the Sacr. Congregation: it may be surmised that this was a period when for the most part the main interests of the Order and its Definitory General were not in the missions and that the junior Religious were not bidden and encouraged to write and describe regularly the state of affairs, politically and spiritually: or it may be that risks on the road prevented more communications from reaching destination safely. But from the material which survives it is evident that two principal wants hampered the work of the four 'Persian' posts and inflicted hardship on the Carmelites during much of the reign—non-receipt of the annual allowance from their endowment fund, and non-dispatch to Persia of sufficient missionaries to keep the posts regularly staffed. It is a remarkable fact that during more than 150 years that the mission was active no benefactor ever added to the original, modest endowment by baron Cimini in 1604: there is no indication (at least from 1650) that the Order itself contributed a single scudo.

In the preceding reigns the reader has read how under the administration of the Sacr. Congregation the annual interest on the fund was not all transferred to the original destination, but two-fifths made over to Carmelite houses at Aleppo and Mt. Carmel, which were entirely independent of the Persian Mission: this was after more than half the total yield of interest had already been deducted at source to pay for the upkeep of the Seminary at San Pancrazio,

and thus left a bare 50 scudi each for the three first houses in Persia—Isfahan, Basra, Shiraz, calculated on a basis of 25 scudi for each of two missionaries at every one of these posts, six Fathers in all. In founding the Residence at Julfa Fr. Elias of S. Albert had committed the error of not providing a special capital fund for its upkeep; the Sacr. Congregation consistently declined to accord this Residence financial recognition. When the channels of charity dried, and the subsidy from Europe did not reach the convent and Residences other than Julfa, the penury and suffering of the missionaries became therefore extreme, abandoned and half starved as they were. Evidence can be quoted. The Procurator Substitute sent to Rome in a submission to the Sacr. Congregation of 26.8.1695 gave the following figures:¹

“1689, 1690, 1691 no allowances received from Rome: in 1692 124 sequins and 240 scudi
“only: 1693, 1694 nothing received: in 1695 425 scudi—a total of 665 scudi and 124 sequins
“instead of 2,800 due.”

As to Julfa:

“There should be in Persia 8 missionaries in the three Residencies i.e. four at Isfahan, “two at Shiraz, two at Basra, *not including* those who are, and will be at *Julfa, which has undertaken to maintain itself without subsidies being sent from Rome*, as in fact it has done. . . .”²

In that year also a petition was made to Cardinal Altieri:³

“The Discalced Carmelite missionaries in Persia humbly represent to his Eminence that “they are in need of a financial allowance in order to continue their missions in those parts, “all the more that they are reduced to extremity, and have been compelled to pawn a cross, “thurbile, a chalice: and, on the other hand, at this juncture with the wars between the “Christian princes *the Order is too burdened to be able to provide any help*. They therefore “beg their Eminences, as their only refuge, to supply that assistance, so that they may be “able to feed themselves and not abandon the undertaking. . . .”

There is on record, too, a ‘bulletin’ from the Vicar at Shiraz dated 13.5.1701, and another from Ispahan of 30.6.1702,⁴ showing that the annual grants from Rome for 1698, 1700, 1702 had not been received there. Moreover, if fixed sums were allotted by the Sacr. Cong. for travelling expenses to various places in the East, these were deducted not from the gross revenue from the Cimini di Cacurri fund, but charged to the annual stipend of the Fathers in Persia: how the Fathers found money for travelling homewards does not transpire. But, 22.3.1700:⁵

‘the Procurator General of the Carmelites having asked the Sacr. Congregation to take ‘over the indebtedness incurred by the mission at Aleppo through two Religious on their ‘return from Persia, lacking funds for their travelling expenses, having borrowed from a ‘merchant in Aleppo 45 sequins, on which 10 per cent interest had to be paid, which the ‘mission at Aleppo was too poor to bear’, a minute was made:

“these missions have their assignments coming from the legacy of the baron di Cacurri
“left to the Seminary of S. Pancrazio,” [? sic]

and the order passed:

“let the sum in question be paid under the name of an extraordinary allowance to Card. “Francesco Barberini and meanwhile let them be warned to beware of contracting similar “obligations in future which the Sacr. Congregation will not meet.”

¹ S.N.R., II, p. 149.

² *dem*, p. 148.

³ *Idem*, p. 247.

⁴ *Idem*, O.C.D. arch.

⁵ S.R., vol. 535, p. 228.

As Vicar Provincial Substitute, Fr. Basil of S. Charles asked, 15.1.1700,¹ that the annual allowance should be received in advance, as his superiors (i.e. the Fr. Syndic) did not send it in time (providing that for 1698 half-way through 1699); while he affirmed that from the year 1680 allowances for at least six years had not been received at all: an explanation of this non-receipt of funds being required by the Sacr. Congregation, the Procurator General replied that funds had been punctually remitted by the Fr. Syndic but had been addressed to Bishop Elias, who might have distributed the money without taking account of the years represented.

A statement² of

"Accounts of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers . . . in the Seminary of S. Pancrazio, 1.10.1701 to 23.11.1704"

gives as

"paid to the missionaries in Persia for their maintenance for the years 1702-3 1,000 scudi,"

i.e. 500 scudi per annum for five Residences, and at the rate of 50 scudi for each Father, two to a Residence. When Mgr Peter of Alcantara of S. Teresa was leaving Persia after having been there about nine years, he mentioned, 2.9.1706:³

"As the Messrs. Shariman have lost their fervour and are no longer what they exhibited themselves to be, this House of Julfa has no income on which to subsist. . . . Markar 'Shariman's son, still here, for five years past has declined to pay the income from a 'hammam' (Persian vapour bath) saying that this 'hammam' is his, and his father on 'his departure had so bidden him. But we have a contract in due form . . .",

and in 1714 this right was once more urged on the Cardinals of the Congregation from Isfahan:⁴

". . . Our Residence at Julfa has also a 'hammam', which is in the hands of Mr. 'Emmanuel, of the family of the 'Counts' Shariman, and from which there is 5 Tumans 'income, but that gentleman will not pay us. . . ."

By 1719 the new Vicar Provincial⁵ reported to the Praepositus General in Rome:

"we are in great poverty through the allowances not arriving and because of the bankruptcy of the French (India) Company, in which this mission had more than 7,000 rupees capital, on the yield from which, in addition to the allowance from Rome, it was able to support itself. Now for 9 years past not a farthing has been got from it and already 'our mission is 100 Tumans in debt. On my arrival I found that we owed 85 Tumans: 'and I in my three years as Vicar Provincial have added 15 Tumans spent in Isfahan 'alone, where living is very dear and to manage very parsimoniously requires 12 Tumans 'a year out of the 20 or a little more received from Rome for distribution among all the 'Residences, for each of which 6½ Tumans is the portion. The Capuchin Father, our 'attorney in Surat, informs me that, unless we have recourse promptly to the courts in 'Paris, we shall undoubtedly lose capital and interest. . . . We consider it best to send a 'Religious to Paris and Fr. Jerome Francis expressed himself willing to go. . . ."

Two years later, 26.5.1721,⁶ the same Vicar Provincial, Fr. Faustin, wrote to the Order:

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 538, p. 455.

² *Idem*, vol. 550, p. 87, dated 23.11.1704.

³ *Idem*, vol. 560, p. 228.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 70, Fr. Jerome Francis, 18.9.1714.

⁵ Fr. Faustin, O.C.D. 242 b: he mentioned the interesting detail "for the table", i.e. food, on the voyage from Marseilles to Alexandretta he and his companions had paid the captain 25 francs each.

⁶ O.C.D. 238 g.

“ . . . Shortly I shall have to borrow again, not having had any allowance last year nor this, nor has any money been received at Aleppo, where our procurator has a claim for another 9 Tumans. I sent to our Fr. Vicar General in original the letter from our Fr. procurator at Marseilles, wherein mention was made of all the money which had been sent to us: and the truth is that from the year 1716 up till the present I have received nothing except the allowance for one year (about 20 Tumans) and another 20 Tumans remitted to me by the Sacr. Congregation in payment of a debt owed us by Mgr Pidou. On account of this condition of affairs I have been unable to give any money to our Residences at Basra and Shiraz: so, in order to exist, the Father Vicars there have had to do what they could by other means: the one at Shiraz borrowed money on loan and made a quantity of wine, which was bought by the consul for France and the Portuguese Agent, so that with the profit the Vicar has kept himself and his companion and repaired the house which was likely to collapse. . . .”

Then, with regard to numbers, at the beginning of 1695 there were 12 Carmelite Fathers and two Lay Brothers in the three Persian posts, a number of whom were shortly afterwards dispersed to other missions and to Europe. Two died in 1695 and 1696.¹ The French Franciscan Tertiary, Fr. Cherubin, who had been of such assistance to him in the school for Armenians at Julfa from 1690 and who in 1695 left Persia, was solicited to return by Mgr Elias in 1698-9² and did so at a later date, having by then entered the Carmelite Order. Early in 1700 the Vicar Provincial Substitute was asking for two or three missionaries to be sent out as he was alone at Isfahan except for a single companion:³ and, 23.7.1703, the Procurator General of the Order in Rome asked the Sacr. Congregation for sanction to send three more Religious to Persia, as one had died and two there were ‘of advanced age’.⁴ In January 1706 a new recruit and Vicar Provincial arrived from Rome:⁵ while a minute of 27.3.1708 speaks of Bishop Elias as taking “two others with him” back to Persia:⁶ one Father had indeed left Rome in 1708 and another reached Isfahan by the autumn of 1709.⁷ But one missionary had been consecrated a Bishop and left Persia in 1706, and on 13.9.1709 Fr. Raymond was writing to Rome:⁸

“We are in want of many things, especially of companions, as for five years I have remained *alone*, looking after this very large house with its garden,” i.e. the Convent.

The Vicar Apostolic of the diocese in reporting, 5.6.1715, the death of Fr. Cherubin, aged 60, at Julfa, added that in the space of about three years the Carmelites

“had *lost six or seven Religious*, at the time there being only one to take charge of both the “Convent and the Residence in Julfa”:⁹

this was confirmed by the Vicar of Basra in the words:¹⁰

“in four Residences only I myself and Fr. Jerome Francis, and Fr. Bonaventura freshly ‘arrived remain alive: all the others are dead.’”

The position became worse, for after Fr. Bonaventura¹¹ died the same writer, 9.5.1716,¹² commented:

¹ Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., 5.10.1696, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 173.

² *Vide S.N.R.*, II, p. 216, 19.9.1698, and *Idem*, p. 264, 14.6.1699.

³ *Idem*, vol. 545, p. 490.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 364.

⁵ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 364.

⁶ Fr. Paul Augustine, 8.9.1715, *S.R.*, vol. 603.

⁷ The first writer in all these records in the archives observed to spell the word as ‘Isfahan’—previously all wrote ‘Asfahan’ or ‘Spahan’.

⁸ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 481.

⁹ O.C.D. 238 g

¹⁰ *S.R.*, vol. 538, p. 455, 15.1.1700.

¹¹ *S.R.*, vol. 562, p. 95.

¹² *S.R.*, vol. 603, p. 94.

¹³ *S.R.*, vol. 608.

"The harvest is great, but the labourers few: . . . in four missions we are only two
"Religious. . . ."

Fr. Jerome was alone at Julfa, the Bishop of Baghdad the sole occupant of the Carmelite Convent in the city, in which he had been given lodging, a servant of the Residence, all there was at Shiraz.¹ Considering the number of students of Arabic and missionary subjects there had been at the seminary at S. Pancrazio about that period, it is not a little strange that recruits had not been regularly supplied, the stations fully staffed; but it was 20.3.1713² before the Procurator General in Rome is found applying to the Sac. Congregation to be allowed to dispatch two Fathers to Persia, and 30.5.1715 before two were dispatched from Italy, with another four following in May 1716.³ When they had all arrived in 1717 the mission consisted of Frs. Paul Augustine and Urban at Basra, Fr. Cyril at Shiraz, Fr. Faustin, Vicar Provincial at Isfahan with Fr. Alexander of S. Sigismund, Frs. Jerome and Philip Mary at Julfa and a lay brother. The Vicar Provincial himself described the position at the Convent in his letter of 1719:⁴

"Here, then, we are three in choir, and one lay brother, and we carry out our Observance
"on the footing of a 'house of study'. . . . We administer the Sacraments to the new
"consul for France" (? M. de Gardanne) "and all his household. . . . In this city there
"are only one Capuchin Father from Angers and two Portuguese Augustinians. . . .
"There are also the Dutch merchants and the English company who are kind to and respect
"us greatly, especially the English gentlemen from whom we receive many acts of charity,
"and in less than a year they have given us four (Religious) habits and two cloaks of good
"cloth without our having asked them for it: so I would like you, Father General, in your
"first letter to be pleased to write and charge me to salute these gentlemen on your behalf
"and thank them in your name for the great charity and kindness they bestow on us. . . ."

An anonymous "Compendious Narrative of the . . . Duties carried out by the Carmelite
"Fathers in Persia,"⁵ undated but written between 1695 and 1699, gives the following epitome
of work at this period:

"Our missions in Persia are established in four places—Basra, Shiraz, Isfahan and at
"Julfa, the most important centre of the Armenians in all the East. In Basra there are
"usually two Religious: their duties are to sing Mass and preach every feast-day: Maronite,
"Syrian and Armenian Christians come there, at times few, at others more in number,
"according to the ships coming from India and the prosperity of trade with Baghdad.
"Every week the Fathers go to the houses of the Christians and teach Christian Doctrine
"to their families. That is all that can be done in that mission. At Shiraz there are also
"two missionaries; but, on account of the few Christians there are, there is nothing else
"to be done but preach every Sunday and whenever the missionary is skilled in medicine
"he profits by the opportunity very often to baptize dying children of the infidels. At
"Isfahan city there are only two missionaries, whose business is to read the Gospel over
"the heads of the infidel sick—men, women and children, who come every day in large
"numbers and beg this favour.⁶

"So, when they (the Fathers) see that death is inevitable and near, they baptize them,
"i.e. the children under the age of 16. From what I have seen in the 'register' more than
"7,000 were baptized in this way, and all died: none of those baptized survived. Besides
"this it sometimes happens that some adult when in danger of death asks for baptism:
"as now there are two in Isfahan baptized by us who observe the holy Faith loyally, as
"far as it can be done in secret. In Julfa the principal mission work consists of singing Mass

¹ Fr. Jerome Francis, Julfa, 26.1.1716, O.C.D. 238 u.

³ *Idem*, vol. 608, p. 222.

⁴ O.C.D. 242 b.

² S.R., vol. 586, p. 328.

⁵ S.N.R., II, p. 281.

⁶ This vogue was continuing in 1710, witness Fr. Jerome Francis, 7.9.1710, S.R., vol. 579, p. 105, and S.N.R., III, p. 374: "in our Convent in Isfahan our whole mission is to read the Gospel over the heads of the Muhammadan women 'labouring in some sickness, who led by some faith continue to come to us to be cured.'"

"to Gregorian chant and preaching every Sunday and feast-day. When the sermon is "over the Catholics, on leaving the Church, are in the habit of giving some small alms for "distribution to the poor, who gather in large numbers. They remain round the church "till the end of the Office. When all is over, one or two of our scholars get them together "and make them sit in a circle: the hour-glass is turned, and they begin to teach them the "catechism for one hour: after that the alms are distributed among them. On the other "days of the week there is school—usually 60–80 Catholics and heretics: some have to be "taught to read and write Armenian, others rhetoric and others philosophy and the older "ones too the moral theology of the Blessed Albert, geometry, etc. In this all the day is "spent; but for want of sufficient Religious not so much profit is derived from it as there "should be and would be: for now there are never more than two Religious and it is "impossible for two to attend to everything. In this House it would require at least ten "or twelve missionaries . . .; but in regard to this our Superiors . . . say they have "nothing with which to maintain and support them . . . so we need to find a half-way "house to obtain funds . . . and for this the best plan, it appears to me, would be to do "away with the Seminary at San Pancrazio . . . and the money which goes to that "Seminary could be sent to Persia to increase the number of missionaries. . . ."

(The "Narrative" adds, ingenuously and with some humour: ". . . or else a general "collection might be made among all the Cardinals and prelates, and a fund established "with it. . . .")

To the Cardinal Prefect on 20.4.1702 Fr. Peter of Alcantara¹ wrote frankly with regard to Julfa:

"For the present we have to be content with keeping up the little Catholic community "there is among the Armenians and to sing the glories of the Crucified in the midst of "enemies of the Cross. To say more than that would be mere pretence: because, if indeed "Persians do not refuse to discuss religion, it is out of pure curiosity and display of intellect, "not out of any desire to profit by it, or out of any pious liking they may have for the "mysteries of our holy Faith. This lack of real affection extends likewise to foreign nations, "especially the Franks and, if it appears that they pay respect to foreigners, it is, I believe, "purely feigned and out of self-interest";

and he ended by relating the treatment the Court had meted out to a Tatar envoy who wanted to return to his own country with the diverting remark:

"to whom they refused a passport on the pretext that, when he passed through here on "his way to Europe, he declined to receive the customary royal (payment" or allowance) "for expenses, which they put down to the great crime of *pride*. . . ."

Still, Fr. Faustin, Vicar Provincial in 1721, who made the Convent in Isfahan city his dwelling, when not at Hamadan, wrote² of

"this house, where Persian notables come almost daily, and also some of the royal race, "taking pleasure in conversing with me and in this garden, which is very large. . . ."

In 1708 the French envoy Michel, of whom more will be said anon, obtained from Shah Sultan Husain

"a *raqam* which confirms that which had been given to the reverend Discalced Carmelite "Fathers to have their House in Isfahan repaired at the expense of his Majesty and to have "water in their garden without hindrance."

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 427.

² *O.C.D.* 238 g, 26.5.1721.

"This is Our command, which all Our subjects must obey. As the ambassador from "the Emperor of France has represented to us how that formerly there had been granted "a *raqam* by which, wherever there should be need of repairs in the House of the "Fathers of Maidan-i-Amir, which is in Our city of Isfahan, these should be executed "with money from Our treasury and that the water which runs through their garden "shall be given them without any hindrance, at the request of the ambassador We "have commanded that a *raqam* should be issued in confirmation of what is stated "above: and it is Our wish that every time the House of the Fathers may have need "of repairs these should be done at the expense of Our treasury and that the water "should be allowed to flow into their garden without any hindrance. . . ."

Writing, 29.6.1706,¹ the Bishop of Baghdad notified the Sacr. Congregation that in accordance with the Bulls received he had the previous Sunday consecrated in his chapel at Hamadan as titular Bishop of Nicopolis the Carmelite Father Peter of Alcantara of S. Teresa, who had been selected in Rome as vicar apostolic for the dominions of the Mogul, etc.; but the new prelate did not even reach his destination, dying "on an English ship before reaching "Surat", as reported in a letter of 28.7.1707.²

To succeed him was appointed Fr. Maurice of S. Teresa, titular Bishop of Anastasiopolis, who arrived in Persia, in company with another Carmelite, Fr. Joseph Mary of S. Mary, and addressed letters from Tabriz to the Pope and to the Cardinal Prefect, dated 16th and 17th January 1711:³

"They had been robbed and imprisoned for six successive days after arrival in Erzerum. "The Pasha demanded 10,000 piastres for their release, but the amount was settled at '3,000 piastres, loaned by local Catholics. On the Persian frontier also they were deprived 'of what money they had left, and put in prison for a day. Before they quitted Erzerum 'the Pasha was arming a force for a war against Persia; while in Tabriz at the time there 'was internecine strife among the citizens, 3,000 of whom had been killed up till then in 'the city, and the governor's palace was being attacked. . . ."

This Carmelite Vicar Apostolic for the Mogul's dominions it was who on account of a monetary claim for 270 rupees against the mission in Persia detained in India the money and effects willed by Bishop Elias to his Residence in Julfa, so that that needy post was not relieved financially, as it might have been;⁴ but he is of note as the subject of a most extraordinary step on the part of the East India Company, which, although not directly concerned with the mission in Persia, yet testifies once more to the good relations which so generally subsisted between the Catholic friars of this Order and the Protestant merchants from England in this region, and to the good opinion the latter had of the former.

Early in the 1700's those Carmelites of the convent in Goa (technically still part of the Persian mission) who were not Portuguese were summoned to take an oath of obedience to the Portuguese government or to quit Goa. They were not ready to take such an oath and were expelled from the Portuguese dominions (1709), transferring themselves to Sunkara, and so they became merged with those working on the Malabar coast: and in due course some of them found work to hand in the island of Bombay, which had been ceded to the British Crown by Portugal as part of the dowry of Queen Catharine, but were still pursued by the exclusiveness of the Portuguese ecclesiastical authorities in Goa. To Mgr Maurice, the Vicar Apostolic mentioned, the Sacr. Congregation of Prop. Fide is found writing, 4.4.1718:⁵

"It has much displeased the Sacr. Congregation to learn that your lordship continues to "experience molestation and trouble through the unjust attacks made against you and "your missionaries by him who ought more than anyone else to assist and favour you in

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 483.

² *S.R.*, vol. 561, p. 258.

³ *Idem*, vol. 579, p. 38.

⁴ See letters O.C.D. 238 u of 26.1.1716 and O.C.D. 242 m of 1.12.1726.

⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 107, p. 46.

"the exercise of his apostolic ministry. However, it is hoped that with the steps taken by "the Sac. Congregation, and the Briefs sent to your lordship . . . a remedy will be "opportunistically supplied to these irregularities. As regards the particular case of the mission "on the island of Bombay, whenever your Religious are invited and summoned to look after "it and can apply themselves to it without prejudice to their other missions, and when no "other missionaries remain on that island, the Sac. Congregation authorizes and permits "you to take up this new mission without, however, the Sac. Congregation making any "fresh provision for it. . . ."

This on 19.8.1720 was followed by the recording in the *Acta* of the Sac. Congregation:¹

"From various letters written by the Vicar Apostolic and missionaries of the Order of "Discalced Carmelites from the dominions of the Great Mogul and Malabar coast the "serious straits, in which those missions are, both because of the persecution they are "suffering from the Portuguese in particular, and from the Jesuit Fathers . . . can be "gathered. . . ."

The Secretary to the Sac. Congregation added that:

". . . the warning transmitted by our lord (the Pope) to the Archbishop of Goa with "regard to his observance of all His Holiness had bidden him and in respect, too, of Mgr "Maurice, had brought it about that, when the Archbishop informed the viceroy of this, "the latter by command of the king of Portugal published an edict to the effect that whoso- "ever should be ordained a priest in future by any other prelate than the Archbishop of "Goa should be exiled together with all his relatives from the whole of the Portuguese "dominions, as well as all their property therein confiscated, while no one would be "recognized as bishop except he had presented his Bulls or Briefs in the royal chancery "for registration, the king of Portugal being proclaimed in all parts as absolute master of "all the missions in the East.

"He" (Mgr Maurice) "goes on to represent that the missionaries of his Order in India "have no other nation that protects them and assists them but the English alone, who "from England have orders to favour them, considering and perceiving that the Christians under "their (Carmelite) guidance live loyal to the English, whereas the Portuguese Fathers "frequently induce them to rebel.

"Therefore he (the Vicar Apostolic, Mgr Maurice) earnestly begs that your Eminences "will deign to accede to the desire of the 'general' of the English Company, who in the "name also of all that Company would like that there should be cut out and excluded from "the spiritual jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Goa and all Religious subject to him the "island of Bombay owned as property of the Crown of England, and that it be placed "under the jurisdiction of the Vicar Apostolic.

"He further adds that he has sent included with his other letters (by the same English "ships which have brought his letters under reference) a patent (i.e. commission, or letters "patent) in the English language, made out by the (Director) General on the orders of the "director of the East India Company, by virtue of which he consigns to his" (i.e. Mgr Maurice, Vicar Apostolic's) "jurisdiction the island in question and Christian population "of Bombay, desiring that the churches and Catholics be under the control of missionaries "of his (Carmelite) Order. He (Mgr Maurice) therefore ardently wishes the approval of "your Eminences and the extension to the Briefs necessary, as he asserts that it would be "a very effective method for re-establishing all the missions there. On that Mgr the "Secretary may be allowed to point out that the island of Bombay . . . is inhabited by "22,000 native Catholics and some 8,000 English and heathens. . . ."

¹ *Acta* for 1720, p. 471, which are quoted *in extenso* by Fr. Ambrose of S. Theresia, Archivist of the Order, in his publication in its *Analecta* for April-June 1934.

But some months earlier, as published by Fr. E. R. Hull, S.J., in the "*Bombay Mission History*", with a special study of the Padroado question", and quoted in the *Analecta* of the Carmelites, April-June 1934 by Fr. Ambrose of S. Theresia, their Archivist General, the East India Company had concluded the transaction:

"I, Mauricio de S. Theresia, Bishop of Anastasiopoly, Apostolical Vicar General for the "empire of the Grand Mogul as also of the island of Bombay and its dependencies, do "make oath on the Holy Evangelist that at all times I will pay implicit obedience to his "Britannic Majesty, that I will not directly or indirectly communicate or maintain anything "whatever contrary to the honour and dignity of his Britannic Majesty nor to the interests "of the Hon'ble East India Company, that I will pay due obedience unto all orders issued "by the Governor and his successors at all times, that I will teach the Roman Catholic Faith "in its purity, without making any alteration whatsoever. Given under my hand this 16/29th "of May 1720."

Not forty years had passed since the saintly Plunket had been cruelly put to death for the crime of teaching and preaching and performing the rites of the Roman Catholic Faith, and the penal laws were still being fiercely enforced in Britain against all 'recusants'; yet here were the representatives of the Crown of England requiring that a Catholic bishop should swear to them that he would teach that Faith in all its purity! An amazing and historical piece of religious opportunism—and from England came the order to favour the Carmelites!

* * * * *

* * * *

With the departure of Bishop Elias the story of Armenian schismatic hostility in this reign did not end: much of the rest concerns the northern provinces and the Capuchin missions in Tabriz, Tiflis, however. About 1700 there was a local Armenian Uniat bishop in Tabriz,¹ Sarkis Manukian by name, who applied to Rome for faculties (not that he had a diocese with fixed limits²): and the Provincial of the Capuchins of Tours, who bore the curious name of 'Engolismanus', reported that their Fathers kept a school of some sixty pupils at Tabriz:³ the Superior was Fr. Peter from Issoudun: the hospice had already been in existence more than fifty years, but was too poor even to purchase a silver chalice for the chapel.⁴ He complained, 24.7.1704,⁵ of the Katholikos of the Armenians from Echmiadzin having with

"a letter to the governor of this town asked him not to permit the Armenians to come to "our church, but to punish them (for it) and, if they want to abandon their faith, to compel "them to adopt Muhammadanism rather than Catholicism. The governor himself, who "is a 'Turk' (i.e. Muslim) and rather kind to me, told me this. But from his (the Katholikos)" "writing in the Armenian tongue it will be evident how great is the ignorance of this "patriarch (Alexander) and his malice . . . so that they (the Armenians) even fear to "salute me in the streets, lest they should incur the curses of this false 'patriarch' . . .":

and, some three years later,⁶ from Tiflis the same Capuchin referred to:

"the persecution of the Catholics by the patriarch of the Armenians and how he prevents "the people from coming to our churches by menaces, excommunications, uttering many

¹ S.R., vol. 536, p. 380.

² He had been excommunicated and deprived of his office of Vartapet by the Katholikos Alexander on the ground of being considered a 'Catholic', a friend of the Latin Fathers, and for not consenting to anathematize Pope S. Leo and the Council of Chalcedon; but, notwithstanding the excommunication and deposition, he continued in 1710 still to enjoy the support and adherence of the Armenian community in Tabriz (S.N.R., II, p. 370, 2.2 1710).

³ S.R., vol. 543, p. 176, 26.9.1702.

⁴ *Idem*, vol. 550, p. 38.

⁵ S.N.R., II, p. 458.

⁶ *Idem*, p. 513, 1.8 1707.

"blasphemies against the Roman Church, and in proof . . . the letter which he has sent
"to his church here of which I have taken a copy. . . ."

This Katholikos, Alexander, did not always escape retribution or rough treatment himself: the Dominican Fr. Peter Martyr from Julfa, 30.10.1706,¹ described how, when Shah Sultan Husain set out on his pilgrimage to Qum,

"Before going to a distance from the city, i.e. on the 11th September, he bestowed a
"khal'at, i.e. robe of honour, according to Persian custom on Alexander the Vartapet,
"bishop' of Julfa who, as I wrote, had been elected grand patriarch of Echmiadzin in
"place of the last one, giving him with the said robe and a parchment recently sent by the
"king himself the investiture of the patriarchate, as it were, for he had to appear before the
"king clad in it. But, having received this honour, a few days later he received a great
"dishonour, viz. on the 22nd one of the chief officials of the Court caused him to be
"bastinadoed: this was, as far as I have been able to understand, because, as the said
"official had claimed 500 piastres as his perquisite for the robe and document in question,
"Alexander had declined to pay, saying that they had been handed to him by the Shah.
"But the excuse availed him nothing for, when he had been bastinadoed, he had to disburse
"the money demanded under threat of being again treated to the bastinado . . . and after
"the space of a few days the said Vartapet left here, setting out on the 14th October. . . ."

The view of one good linguist, the Carmelite Fr. Basil of S. Charles, as given by him in a letter² to the Cardinal Prefect was that:

"the Armenians are so obstinate in their heresies that it is impossible to convert them.
"The people would easily consent, but the 'bishops' are so hostile that kindness can effect
"nothing with them . . .",

and he suggested that a letter should be addressed to Shah Sultan Husain

"who is very benevolent and studious, asking that the Armenians should be subject to the
"Pope's spiritual authority, and be made to stop cursing Pope S. Leo, and interfering with
"Catholics. . . ."

In that same year, 1708, in fact the French envoy, Monsieur Michel, did obtain from the Shah one *raqam*³ addressed to Vakhtang Mirza (or Vaqtan or Vactanga Khan) viceroy of the principalities of Georgia and Guria, who was bidden to chastise Armenians molesting the Capuchin Fathers at Tabriz, and another *raqam* directed to the Shah's lieutenant in Azarbaijan, telling him to enquire into the matter of the Armenians accused by the Capuchins at Tabriz and to punish them if the accounts were found correct. When the Carmelites Mgr Maurice of S. Theresa and Fr. Joseph Mary of S. Mary were at Tabriz, 17.1.1711,⁴ they found the Capuchin Fathers Peter and Bernard saying Masses daily and caring for the Catholic inhabitants—a little later, 12.1.1715, Fr. Peter indeed wrote of:

"the two households of English, which had been brought back to obedience to the Roman
"church by the missionaries, . . . continuing to be exemplary and zealous—one of them
"has the status of consul for their nation for the trade of their East India Company—which
"is a source of much edification to all Catholics there. . . ."

But already two months earlier, i.e. November 1710, an order had come from the Shah that they, the Capuchins, with the other missionaries in his dominions should be expelled:

¹ S.R., vol. 559, p. 549.

² O.C.D. 238 u, 20.5.1708.

³ S.N.R., III, p. 330.

⁴ S.R., vol. 579, p. 38.

this was because of a violent persecution excited against the poor Catholics by the Katholikos Alexander:

“Two days previously his letters had reached the principal Armenians of Tabriz, and “in these he asserted that the Catholics were Nestorians, and excommunicated those “Armenians who frequented the Capuchin churches and had sent their sons to Latin “schools. . . .”

Mgr Maurice of S. Theresa, in his letter to the Sovereign Pontiff, used the words:

“All this, Holy Father, proceeds from the constant persecution of the missionaries and “Catholics by the patriarch of the Armenians to prevent their entry into Persia: he does “not hesitate to bribe the Turkish and Persian officials so that the latter harm and even “beat with sticks the missionaries, as for instance a few months since happened to the “Capuchin Fathers at Tiflis and Ganjeh and to the Jesuit Fathers at Shamakha. . . . Holy “Father, all Armenians coming to Italy and particularly to Rome deceive Your Holiness “and the Cardinals: *there* they give themselves out to be Catholics, and *here* they are the “greatest persecutors of the missionaries and of true Catholics. . . .”

From Hamadan the Bishop of Baghdad, 23.10.1711,¹ confirmed what had happened, referring to:

“the evil conjuncture of the times in this country with the present very violent persecution “by the schismatic Armenians who, encouraged by their patriarch at Echmiadzin, “Alexander, are on the point of driving all the apostolic missionaries out of Persia. He “has had revoked the favourable royal edicts granted to the very pious French envoy, “Monsieur Michel, three years ago, and obtained others just in the opposite sense. . . . “Some persons consider that everything is being done through the corrupt officials of this “greedy Court without the knowledge of the Shah. . . .”

Bishop Pidou enclosed a letter from the French Capuchin Fr. Peter of Issoudun, written from Isfahan, whither the latter had accompanied the Bishop coadjutor of Baghdad, and where he had been present at five audiences the coadjutor had with Shah Sultan Husain; but he added that he doubted whether the orders then given for stopping this persecution could bear much fruit for long because:

“the most rampant enemy of the Roman Church, the patriarch of the Armenians, is spend- “ing much money at the Court in order to counter the privileges granted us by the king . . .”,

and he asked for protection for his mission.

“The patriarch of the Armenian race arrived here a few days ago,”

reported Fr. Jerome Francis from Isfahan, 31.10.1711,²

“and it is feared lest in this capital he should carry out that (decree) which he obtained “last year against us, i.e. to drive us out of Persia . . .”,

and to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda Fide another Carmelite, Fr. Paul Augustine, protested in connection with this fresh campaign, 20.11.1711:³

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 587, p. 28.

² *S.N.R.*, III, p. 384.

³ *Idem*, p. 386.

"... I do not know from what motive some missionary, well aware of the insults, statements and actions by the Armenian patriarch Alexander, had spoken so misleadingly that, instead of making clear the truth, he had tried to hide it, aided by a *letter written by the patriarch in question to His Holiness*: so that, because of that letter and the false information given there (in Rome), His Holiness replied with a very courteous letter of his own to the patriarch.

"So your Eminence should know that about 20 years ago this patriarch wrote and gave to be printed a booklet (which I have read) in which he spoke with very great contempt of the Holy See, S. Leo and the Council of Chalcedon—and this booklet, about one finger thick, was read by those who have so ill informed Your Eminence: to say that since then the patriarch has changed signifies nothing; because, besides that book still remaining in circulation, on receiving the reply from His Holiness he (Alexander) cast ridicule on that letter. Three years ago at the instance of M. Michel (ambassador from the Most Christian King to the Shah of Persia) the patriarch in question wrote a circular letter to his spiritual subjects, in which he exhorted them to live in peace with all Christians; but . . . after the departure of the ambassador he excommunicated all those who had entered our 'Frank' churches. And at that juncture he was the principal cause that in Turkey many Christians were made Muslims and that so violent a persecution by the Grand Signor occurred in that country. Finally last year (i.e. 1710) as you know from elsewhere, by dint of money he obtained a *raqam* (the most rigorous that there has ever been, they say) against the 'Franks' for our expulsion: and now he has come here to molest us—what it will be, God knows. . . ."

The "very courteous letter" and "reply" from Pope Clement XI, on which the Katholikos Alexander was thus said to have cast ridicule, was dated 15.3.1710 (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 87, p. 194): the mention in it of the Jesuit Père Villotte having stated at Rome how the patriarch had used his authority to encourage good relations with the Latin missionaries reveals the name of the person who "had spoken so misleadingly" in Rome, in the words of the Carmelite Father—information so contrary to the abundant evidence of the violent enmity Alexander showed throughout against the Latin missionaries, that the veracity of the informant about matters Persian in general becomes impugned. Extracts from the Brief are quoted below to show that the Katholikos had taken the initiative in correspondence and that the Sovereign Pontiff forwarded him for signature a formula of Catholic Faith, which would disown the heretical practices and beliefs in which the Armenians persisted:

"Pope Clement XI to the Venerable brother Alexander, Patriarch of the whole Armenian nation.

"Venerable Brother greeting and the Apostolic blessing. With great esteem We perused your Fraternity's letter, wherein besides a clear and courteous expounding of your goodwill to Us there seemed to Us to shine forth, together with your special zeal for the Christian religion, a certain praiseworthy resolve to search and enquire into the truth out of the holy Scriptures and the witness of the Fathers, sure founts (if uncorrupt) whence can especially be elicited that verity.

"Herein, then, We had a pleasing and uncommon example of your good faith; and, as We know what position you occupy and how honoured you are among the celebrated Armenian people, Our heart burned with longing to oblige your present mind, with also the additional hope that, once you had explored the truth, you would become a partaker of Our anxiety to promote the eternal salvation of your folk, and that you would take care to lead the sheep which follow you into Christ's fold along that safe path outside which he who walks utterly errs and strays, in order that they together with you might climb by way of the true Faith to the Divine grace and through grace to everlasting glory in heaven. It was also a delight for Us to learn from your letter that you revere this supreme chair of S. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, following your famous predecessor of

"long ago, Gregory the Illuminator; yet, if you would truly imitate him, as We believe
"you desire to do, it behoves you to accept that same Catholic Faith held by the Holy
"Roman Church, the true and only mother and mistress of all churches in the whole world.

"For, though that people of the Armenians which submits to you as patriarch professes
"the Christian Faith and acknowledges many mysteries of that same Faith and accepts
"in a number of points the true doctrine, yet by lapse of time it has slipped and fallen
"away from that whole and undefiled rule of Faith which from the very start of the nascent
"Church the holy Fathers and Doctors firmly held: and in some points it has dissented
"and actually at present is dissenting, a tragedy We cannot mention without very great
"grief of heart on account of the very great loss of souls redeemed with Christ's blood and
"every sort of bane and calamity which daily results therefrom. For it is certain that
"without a true unadulterated Faith it is impossible to please God: but that is not a true
"and unadulterated Faith which contradicts the Faith in some portion, since it is written
"that he who offends in one thing has become guilty of all. . . ."

Then, after praying that the Katholikos and his flock will abandon schism, and recognize the Roman Pontiff as vicar of Christ and successor of S. Peter, the universal head, Pope Clement XI continued:

" . . . But, in order that a way may be open to you to accomplish this at last with God's
"blessing, We append to this letter of Ours a printed formula in which are contained the
"articles of the holy Catholic Faith. It is not other than that which S. Peter and the
"Apostles taught and which the Roman Church has from the very start set before all the
"faithful to be kept. Now We exhort you and implore you with the utmost charity, as
"you love your salvation and that of your flock, and if you seriously are seeking for it, do
"not delay your signature—not indeed with the pen but rather penned by the heart—and
"add it to this formula; and that you will send it back to Us at once so subscribed, and
"that you will be willing henceforth to be the herald of the truth contained in it, and the
"teacher to that people. In such an endeavour the missionaries will gladly add their
"labours to yours—of course, as is proper, with all submissiveness and respect towards you,
"for it is well known to them that desired it is by Us that the cult of the Catholic religion
"in those parts should be attended by no lessening of your dignity.

"For the rest, We have heard in a grateful and glad spirit from Our well-beloved son,
"the Religious, Jacques Villotte of the Society of Jesus, who (not ?) long since departed
"thence" (i.e. from Persia) "in company with the envoy of the Most Christian King, that
"you had not omitted to encourage by your authority mutual liking between the Armenians
"and the European missionaries: for those good offices We are very greatly in your debt,
"and We much more fervently pray God that what he has begun in you he will make
"perfect, and bountifully pour down on your head the gifts of his grace, in the hope of
"which We very lovingly impart the Apostolic blessing to your Fraternity.

"Given at Rome, the 15th March 1710."

Of the responsibility of the Katholikos Alexander for the widespread persecution of Catholic Christians and missions in the Ottoman Empire in 1708 there is independent witness—from Turkish territory: the Capuchin, Fr. John Baptist from Orleans, a refugee then in Isfahan, wrote as regards their mission at Baghdad:¹

"At last, in the 17th year of our stay in that mission, 22.4.1708 (after we have had the
"blessing . . . to give baptism to more than 5,000–6,000 children of the races, Jacobites
"or Syrians, Nestorians or Chaldaeans, Armenians and Greeks . . . and after having freed
"some Europeans from slavery), the Devil made use of Alexander the patriarch of the
"Armenians, who by dint of money obtained from the Porte a general and most efficacious

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 10.

“decree—full of many calumnies against our missionaries, so that the very Turks had a “horror of it—with orders to expel all from the Ottoman Empire. . . .”

That these constantly recurring attacks stirred up by the schismatic Armenians, whether patriarchs, principal ecclesiastics or seculars, much preoccupied the Latin Fathers is to be seen also from a letter of the Carmelite Vicar Provincial, Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, 28.2.1712,¹ to the Cardinal Prefect, in which he put forward schemes for remedy—far-fetched and wild, it is true, so that they brought him a reprimand from the Secretary to the Sac. Congregation (“Let a reply be written to the petitioner that he should not mix himself in affairs which do “not concern the office of a missionary”):

“I consider that two steps would be of great utility for reconciling the Armenians to the “Roman Church. The first is if the king of France were to grant freedom of trade in his “realms to the Shariman family and to whomsoever we should give an attestation that “they are Catholics and frequent our churches: the second, that Masqat, which is an “important port of the Persian Gulf and was in the hands of the Portuguese, is now occupied “by the Arabs. The latter inflict heavy loss on the Persian coast, and the king of the “Persians has nothing more to his heart than either to gain possession of that town, or to “see it held by some Christian sovereign. But, if the king of France care to promise to “besiege it on condition that, if he agreed, he would have the appointment of the patriarch “of the Armenians, it would beyond doubt be granted him, and, since the patriarch “nominates the bishops, and the latter the parish priests, the whole Armenian nation in “these parts would become Catholic and with God’s favour we should see what for many “centuries past has been attempted in vain. . . .”

If particularly virulent in Persian centres the bitter feeling was not confined to them and can be seen in the Ottoman Empire, not only in the persecution launched by the Katholikos Alexander in 1708 just cited: in 1712 the Capuchins had to abandon Baghdad for the second time, and were asking for a secular envoy to be sent to obtain the reopening of their hospice. Of the first time, in 1701, their Superior wrote:²

“Five years ago we informed you that an agitation having been stirred up by the “Nestorian, Jacobite and Armenian priests . . . in order to save the Catholics and those “who had to be released from chains it became necessary to borrow 7,000 scudi and give “them to the governor. Now in this present year a similar persecution has been started “by the Armenian and Jacobite bishops, who complained to the Turks that all the Christians (i.e. at Baghdad) “have embraced the Catholic Faith, for which reason the governor, when “he had received an order sent express from the Porte for the purpose, at noon on the “12th September (1701) without our having any previous warning of it, came with the “commander of the Janissaries, the Mufti, the Qadi and six officers with 2,000 men mounted “and on foot, with staves and swords and muskets and other iron weapons to pull down “our hospice to its foundations . . . so much so that the governor entered our house and “without any rhyme or reason took an axe and struck at the wall. All followed suit, “imitating him and striking blows: and in a short time both our hospice and church had “been laid in ruins, and plundered. Our books were condemned by the governor to be “burnt, and by the judge to be thrown into the river. . . .”

From 1712 in Julfa and Persia, too, the vindictiveness of the schismatics became unconscionable. In a letter of 22.1.1713³ the Vicar Apostolic of the diocese of Isfahan reported:

“The schismatics obtained a fresh *raqam* in their favour a few days ago, of which I “send a copy . . .”

¹ S.R., vol. 587, p. 134.

² S.N.R., II, p. 412, 10.12.1701, Fr. John Baptist.

³ S.R., vol. 590, p. 29; see also S.N.R., III, p. 418, 21.6.1713.

and he implored the Pope and Christian sovereigns to send letters of recommendation, as the effects of the latest mission had been nullified. He wrote again, 25.3.1713:¹

“For having attempted certain charitable undertakings for the benefit of their quarter
“of Julfa the Messrs. Shariman have met with persecution from one of the principal royal
“officials and together with an Armenian vartapet were bastinadoed at the house of an
“Armenian magistrate. Mr. Nazar (Shariman) who was worse treated than the others is
“still after five days feeling the ill effects of the bastinado and unable to walk. . . .”

And he explained in October of that year:²

“. . . Your Eminence sees to what a pass we are coming: therefore I again beg you, as
“I petitioned you eight or nine months ago, for some efficacious intervention with the Shah
“by a European sovereign: otherwise, when least we are thinking of it, there may arise
“a sudden tempest and sweep away everything in a deplorable shipwreck, without any
“remedy. Already one hears of various proposals and claims by these Persians against the
“‘Franks’, i.e. the French. But under the name of ‘Franks’ all Europeans are included,
“and we Italians shall suffer, too. Pontifical Briefs in the past, even when presented by
“mere missionaries, had a good effect. . . .”

He referred especially to the

“great danger in which the mission at Tabriz lay—the schismatics had for a long time past
“been uttering threats: and lately there had been an embroilment owing to an excommuni-
“cation pronounced by Fr. Peter against an Armenian who pretended to be a Catholic . . .”;

while at Julfa the schismatics were the more irritated because of the success and zeal with which Fr. Cherubin, who in 1694 had been driven out of Julfa with the bishop, was running schools for the Carmelites and preaching. In letters of 29.11.1713: 10.12.1713: 7.3.1714³ the (Dominican) Vicar Apostolic continued to report to Rome on the subject:

“the schismatic Armenians had instigated the issue of, and obtained orders from the Court
“of Persia or from the governor at least that the Catholic church of the Capuchins at
“Tabriz should perform no function under pain of a penalty of 50 Tumans, and that the
“cross and bell should be taken down . . .”;

and, 29.1.1714:⁴

“. . . I have taken several steps to repair the (damage done by) persecution of the
“mission at Tabriz, but all in vain. . . .”

Pope Clement XI had indeed, 25.11.1713, written a Brief—in very mild terms for what the situation appeared to warrant—(Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 90, p. 2):

“. . . With a confident mind We earnestly entreat of the greatness of Your heart,
“well known and most celebrated throughout the whole world, graciously to support those
“same missionaries, as often as the matter should require, and by Your authority and help
“strenuously to protect them from slanders, molestation and ill-treatment, with which ever
“and anon they have been wont to be harassed, whereby they may be able to dwell every-
“where freely, and without any impediment and attend to the duties of their office.
“Moreover We recommend to Your Highness with the same insistence and absolutely
“from Our heart all Catholics dwelling in Your very wide realm whom although separated

¹ S.R., vol. 589.

² *Idem*, vol. 574, 2.10.1713.

³ *Idem*, vol. 600, p. 125.

⁴ S.N.R., III, p. 436.

“from Us by so great a distance between places yet We hold in the bosom of (Our) apostolic affection as if they were present. . . .”

This Pope, so markedly energetic in defending Catholics and indeed all Christians in that distant Eastern country, followed up that appeal to Shah Sultain Husain by another Brief of 17.8.1714 (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 90, p. 108):

“Although because of the obligation of Our pastoral office in several other letters of Ours . . . to Your Highness We have as pressingly as possible striven to procure the favour of Your royal patronage for the Catholics and missionary Religious who reside in Your very extensive dominions, and although we certainly do not fear that You will not admit Our good offices and requests with that same inclination of reciprocal genuine regard which always existed between Your forefathers and Our predecessors, the Roman Pontiffs, nevertheless We are compelled to write to You anew on the same subject now when manifold and indeed serious complaints from those same Catholics and missionaries are being reported to Us, that they themselves are constantly plagued by the plots and false tales of certain men, who since they have become renegades from our Faith, albeit provoked by no offence and wrong done them, yet have no other end in view than to attack bitterly the true Catholics and involve them in certain extreme misfortunes and straits. We therefore strongly beg . . . that You will deign to curb the audacity of wicked men of this kind, and by Your authority cause that the necessary tranquillity be altogether restored forthwith to the above-mentioned Catholics and missionaries.”

However

“on 3.12.1714, the patriarch Alexander, our great persecutor, died, and Moses, archbishop of Julfa, was nominated his successor. . . .”¹

They had together spent 150,000 piastres to have all Catholic missionaries expelled, according to a minute of that year in the secretariat of the Sacr. Congregation.

Section XXIV of the article on ‘Armenia’ in the *Dictionnaire d’Histoire et de Géographie* deals solely with the so-called ‘patriarchs’ at Constantinople and only on the death of the Katholikos Astoadzatur (originally from Hamadan) in 1729 alludes to the succession at Echmiadzin, saying that he had addressed a profession of Faith to Pope Innocent XIII, and that his successor the Katholikos Karapiet (from Zaitun) had sent a letter of homage to Pope Benedict XII: no comments from that source are therefore available as to Armenian-Latin relations in Persia after the death of the Katholikos Alexander.

But from a few words by the Dominican Vicar Apostolic in a letter² of 24.9.1718 from Isfahan,

“the quiet state of affairs, in which at present our missions are, at least as far as the schismatics are concerned, who, although they have in hand the *raqam* so contrary to our interests, are not making use of it to our hurt”:

and from a reference to the cordiality between the grand Wazir and the French Court, which

“does not allow the schismatics the freedom to give vent to their ill will by taking advantage of the favours extorted from the Shah . . .”,

it would appear that from 1714 matters went fairly smoothly for the Uniats until 1720³ when:

¹ S.R., vol. 600, p. 494, letter of 12.1.1715 from Fr. Peter, Capuchin, Tabriz.

² S.N.R., II, p. 430.

³ Date uncertain, it may be 1724.

"during the siege of Tabriz by the Turkish army in 1720 [? *sic* for 1725] 'Uthman Pasha told "the Christians to remain in their churches and published a decree guaranteeing them safety "there. So the Capuchin Fr. Bernard from Bourges, who had been resident there upwards "of twenty years and was feeble, with 100 Catholic Armenians remained in the Latin "church. On the eighth day the assault took place and 'Uthman Pasha was the first "person killed. Though Fr. Bernard hung out the French flag, it was of no avail: the "doors were broken down and all put to the sword. Fr. Bernard had his body cut through "from side to side by a sabre stroke and then his neck was half severed. . . ."¹

Moreover, in 1721 Tabriz had been very badly damaged by an earthquake, so that according to a letter of the Bishop of Isfahan, 4.7.1721:²

"the Capuchin Fathers after the ruining of Tabriz by the earthquake had left there to "come to Isfahan. . . ."

On the other hand the Catholic missions at Tiflis had been destroyed owing to Armenian violence, and on the instructions of the Holy See and armed with expostulatory letters from the Pope, the Emperor and the king of France the (Dominican) Bishop of Isfahan negotiated until, 22.2.1722,³ he was in a position to write to Cardinal Sacripante:

" . . . At last matters being well settled, for the mission (Capuchin) at Tiflis I have "obtained as much as His Holiness had desired and demanded, i.e. that the losses suffered "should be made good, both those of the Fathers there, and those of the Catholics there: "that both the church and the house of the Fathers there should be rebuilt, and that the "patriarch and the authors of the cruel attack committed there should be punished.

"So the royal *raqam*, i.e. edict or grant, is that the church and house of the Fathers "should be rebuilt better than they were before being destroyed, that there be handed "over to the Fathers 360 Tumans, which amount to the sum of about 5,000 Roman scudi. "Then, for the punishment of the patriarch, he has been compelled by a royal *raqam* to "pay 3,000 sequins and to send here to the capital his vicar-general or another 'bishop' "to give an account of his actions on that occasion. Besides, in the same *raqam* a warning "is notified to the patriarch and all the Armenians that, if another time they should attempt "a similar attack, they would have to pay 200 Tumans together with an order to the "governor to punish them at his discretion. Finally, orders were given that, under pain "of a fine of 12 Tumans, S. Leo should not be cursed, as will be read in the copy of the "*raqam* herein enclosed.

" . . . I have also obtained a *raqam* for the mission at Ganjeh according as I was "requested by the Capuchin Fathers there. I have also obtained what the Jesuit Fathers "at Erivan desired, and what was necessary for our mission here. How long these *raqams*, "or edicts will last, and how they will be carried out God alone knows, because here it "can be truly said *Nihil permanet sub sole*—nothing under the sun lasts: and three days "after M. Michel the ambassador extraordinary from the most Christian king had left here" (i.e. in 1708) "these officials granted the Armenians just the contrary of what he had "obtained in our favour: while the Bishop of Agathopolis was ill, the Armenians obtained "the total cancellation of the *raqam* which he had succeeded in getting after great effort. "For *jus est in pecuniis*—justice goes by money. . . ."

With that the factor of the enmity of Armenian schismatics will be left until after the arrival of the Afghans, while the anomalous situation of the bishops of Baghdad in Persia, where

¹ See Fr. C. da Terzorio's *Missioni dei Minori Cappuccini*, vol. III, Rome, 1920.

² *S.R.*, vol. 634, p. 384.

³ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 530.

they continued to reside until near the end of this reign, is described because of its repercussions on the position of the Carmelite bishops of Isfahan and mission posts, and certain political aspects.

* * * * *

* * * *

With the revival of the bishopric of Isfahan it became not a little embarrassing for Bishop Pidou of Baghdad to remain within the diocese and jurisdiction of another; but at the same time he was evidently unwilling to quit the amenities and safety of Persia where, especially in the Persian capital, he had opportunities for the dignified performance of episcopal functions, and where, as a scholar of the Armenian language, he was in his element in dealing with that community.

By this period the income from the invested endowment of the diocese of Baghdad produced, or made available to the Bishop through the Sacr. Congregation, only the sum of some 1,000 French crowns (écus), to the concern of the Bishop who asked for an explanation of the shrinkage:¹ and, as he liberally paid for the expenses of several French secular chaplains from the Seminary for Foreign Missions at Paris and from the third Order of S. Francis, he had got seriously into debt. Having left Hamadan in July 1695 with that intention, he is found writing from Isfahan, 31.10.1695, to Mgr Cibo, then Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation:²

"I had come here on my way to Shiraz and Basra, and am looking out for travelling companions in order to betake myself to the diocese assigned to me as soon as possible, and I hope to find them shortly, at least as far as Shiraz. . . . I confess to your Excellency, however, that I am in the greatest straits here, constrained to go to Basra alone and to leave here in Isfahan Monsieur Gaudreau" (of the Seminary at Paris) "alone and Monsieur Roc" (also from the Seminary) "alone at Hamadan: . . . the former having taken literally what you had written me about doing everything possible to recover the property left by my predecessor has, however, taken and spent so intemperately during my absence, while I had gone to Hamadan out of obedience" (to your instructions), "that I am reduced to beggary, laden with debts and heavy interest, and I can scarcely obtain credit by reason of the expenses incurred by him in litigation still pending and undecided. . . ."

A separate note of the same date, addressed to the Cardinals of the Congregation, was in the same strain:³

"The long litigation, fruitless up till now, for the recovery of the property left by my predecessor, and the many expenses of the constant journeys which the Sacr. Congregation have obliged me and oblige me to make having reduced me to extreme indigence and loaded me with debts and heavy interest, I now . . . implore the compassion of your Eminences and beg them to send me some financial aid through the Father Procurator General of the Discalced Carmelites who, I hope, will receive me in their hospice at Basra whither I am about to set out. . . ."

However he had changed his mind a month later⁴ about proceeding to Basra:

". . . having been strongly dissuaded from it by Mgr Elias of S. Albert and by all prudent persons I have been finally constrained to yield to the twofold reason⁵ laid before me

¹ 1702, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 424.

² *S.R.*, vol. 525, p. 257.

³ *Idem*, p. 252.

⁴ Mgr Pidou to Mgr Cibo, Rome, 28.11.1695, *S.R.*, vol. 525, p. 253.

⁵ The "reasons" against his going to live in Basra were quoted by him as given by the Carmelites at Basra:

"(a) As Basra had been captured by the Arabs, everyone was fleeing from it . . . a long and cruel war was foreseen . . . as it was a seaport it might have to be abandoned, and the Fathers and other Christians obliged to take refuge in Persia; (b) the Fathers could not receive him in their house on account of its small size, and in order to avoid confusion, (c) as the orders from the Turkish government were that missionaries might not enter the houses of Christians, if Mgr the bishop were to go to Basra, he might be a cause of both himself and the Fathers being expelled at the instigation of schismatics; (d) the climate was unhealthy, the heat in summer excessive, while the Bishop was already of advanced age and afflicted with various ailments."

“by the missionaries of S. Teresa who are there. . . . So, not knowing where to turn, . . .
“I can do naught else but cry day and night. . . . ‘Manus Dei tetigit me’ with this baneful
“and impracticable bishopric of Babylon, which I would never have accepted except by
“force, your lordship knows this. . . . If at length my resignation, so many times repeated,
“be accepted, I look to your old affection for me that I be allowed some small pension.
“. . . If, however, it be not accepted, then . . . deign to obtain for me the favour re-
“quested of being allowed to remain in Persia anywhere it may seem to me more suitable,
“as was already conceded to my predecessor. . . . By reason of the commodiousness of
“the premises Hamadan would please me but, lying out of the way as it does and with a
“very cold situation, troublesome to an infirm old man as I am . . . certainly little suited
“for a bishop: from it I cannot attend to my duties, as it is out of the way and almost
“without any trade: and it is most difficult there to obtain funds sent from Aleppo, and
“one can rarely get letters or find credit. On the other hand, at Shamakha, Tabriz,
“Isfahan and other large towns everything is to be had easily and there are frequent
“opportunities for writing and for bargaining with merchants for remittance of funds. . . .
“For the rest, your lordship should consider that it had never been the intention of the
“lady who founded the bishopric of Baghdad that the residence of the bishop should be in
“the dominions of the cruel Ottomans, but in Persia, in which at that time Baghdad was
“situated. . . .”

The Bishop pulled every string in his reach: on the day following the above letter he addressed another to the Papal Nuncio at the Court of Louis XIV and the latter, titular Archbishop of Damascus, 16.7.1696,¹ wrote to Mgr Fabroni, Secretary to the Sacr. Congregation:

“By the hand of Monsieur de St. Olon, brother of Mgr Pidou de St. Olon, Bishop of
“Baghdad, there has been handed me a packet containing a letter which that prelate had
“written to me, accompanied by a packet addressed by him to Mgr Cibo. . . . His brother
“mentioned above, Monsieur de St. Olon, is a gentleman of the bedchamber of the King”
(of France), “well known to me, and in station meriting every consideration. He has
“spoken to me about the requests of Mgr his brother, and as for my enlightenment he has
“given me two papers, I pass these on to your lordship. . . .”

In the one of those two notes Monsieur de St. Olon, after referring to the boundaries fixed between the two dioceses of Isfahan and Baghdad, remarked:

“De sorte qu’on le laisse pour ainsy dire Maistre des Deserts: il ne peut aller à Bagdat,
“qui est aux Turcs et encor moins à Bassora, dont les Arabes viennent de s’emparer. Il ne
“luy est plus permis de demeurer à Hispahan ny à Hamadan, anciennes demeures de ses
“predecesseurs. De sorte qu’il ne scayt où aller. On pourrait l’établir à Alep suivant les
“raisons contenues au Mémoire cy-joint. Il demande qu’on luy fixe une demeure commode
“et utile à la Religion. . . .”

It was pleaded that it was no criterion that a similar request to fix the seat of the bishops of Baghdad at Aleppo had been made by the late Mgr Picquet in the preceding pontificate, and refused. In the session of the Congregation, 12.11.1696, the papers were submitted to Cardinal Pamphili: and it could have been hardly comforting to the harassed Bishop of Baghdad that the brief decision recorded was:

“let him reside in some place in his diocese most convenient to his ‘subjects’ and to himself.”

However, no sooner had he consecrated the new Bishop of Isfahan in December 1696 than

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 525, p. 261.

"Mgr Pidou left for Hamadan with one of his clerics. Two of the priests from the Seminary in Paris have remained behind, and will shortly sell their house and then go back, I do not know whether to Hamadan or to Europe . . .",

as stated in a passage in a letter of 29.1.1697.¹

"Seeing that the house at Julfa was useless to me and a great expense and outside the diocese, I had agreed with the gentlemen from the Seminary to sell it to pay off debts contracted here; but these orders of mine were not executed after my departure from Isfahan, 6.6.1697 . . ."

wrote Mgr Pidou himself, 11.8.1699.² At Hamadan he remained until Bishop Elias had departed for Rome, and in the words of Mgr Pidou himself he received a communication dated 14.10.1699 from the Archbishop of Ancyra (then in Isfahan) to this effect:

"I see now that, unless I am mistaken, the presence of your Illust. lordship would be useful here (in Isfahan) in order that the work begun may be continued, and to make up for the absence of Mgr Elias,"

and lower down was added:

"It would be no less necessary for your Illust. lordship to come to Isfahan, at least for some time, in order to adjust these interests, duties and disputes, which, I see, are very involved. . . ."

So the Bishop of Baghdad continued, in reporting this to the Sacr. Congregation:

". . . Your Illustr. lordship will see that it is not I who have chosen to be here in the midst of many hardships and in straits, burdened by poverty in this city, where there is a shortage of food; but after mature deliberation and after I had taken the opinion of persons of sense. I arrived here 2.11.(1699). . . My faculties having almost expired, I beg your lordship to obtain for me confirmation of them, and in addition the Briefs necessary to permit of my exercising pontifical privileges outside my diocese, without which I shall be unable to provide for the spiritual needs of my suffering flock; and in fact all the missionaries and Catholics of Persia, who have at present no other Catholic prelate than the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, who resides in Greater Armenia, will suffer without them. . . ."³

Moreover, soon after his arrival in Isfahan, Bishop Pidou had, 10.11.1699, put the position in another light:⁴

". . . I was on the point of leaving (Hamadan) for Baghdad, hoping to find some security in view of the peace concluded with the Turks. From several sides I have been so effectually dissuaded from it by persons with knowledge: and as, too, I lack the money for such a journey, I determined to come here with the help of Indian merchants, who lent me money at 24 per cent. . . . The Armenian schismatics exhibit pleasure at my residing here. . . . I still think of going hence to Basra as I greatly desire; but, hearing that that town is constantly in a state of upheaval and disorder, . . . I think I shall be obliged to give way to the wishes of the people and remain in this commercial city, not isolated and out of the way as at Hamadan. . . ."

¹ Fr. John Bartholomew, O.P., *S.N.R.*, II, p. 184; and see Mgr Pidou's own letter of 23.1.1697, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 180.

² *S.N.R.* II, p. 279.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 536, p. 121, letter of 23.11.1699.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 287.

The Sacr. Congregation was still¹ critical of Bishop Pidou residing in another's diocese and showing little disposition to enter his own: the minute was worded:

"Mgr Pidou, Bishop of Baghdad, having betaken himself from Hamadan to live in 'Isfahan in consideration of the permission received from your Eminences to reside outside 'his diocese, or else in view of the need, which he presumes, for himself to be in Isfahan 'on account of the absence of Mgr Elias, Bishop of that city . . . petitions your Eminences 'to confirm his faculties and the licence to exercise pontifical privileges outside his diocese. 'On that I must tell your Eminences that, according to the faculties, he cannot exercise 'pontifical privileges outside his diocese, and that in 1694 he was notified that he might 'only exercise them in Assyria, Mesopotamia, Basra and Amid, districts of his diocese. 'Then, with regard to his exercising pontifical privileges outside it, there is the decree of 'the Sacr. Congregation dated 28.5.1651 which prohibits him. So it rests with your 'Eminences to reflect how provision ought to be made for the needs of the diocese of 'Isfahan, in view of the absence of its own Bishop, 30.8.1700."

The orders passed were:

"They (the Cardinals of the Congregation) sanctioned the extension (of the faculties) 'for 3 years as to both places, but he should take care to obtain the permission of the 'Ordinary, as far as possible. . . ."

On 27.7.1700,² however, Bishop Pidou wrote to acknowledge the receipt of an intimation from the Sacr. Congregation, dated 20.9.1699,

'of the sudden withdrawal of the favour, granted him shortly before, of being allowed to 'reside outside his ever inaccessible diocese in any place he might judge suitable and 'advantageous to the sacred ministry. Now the time is limited to three years and the place 'to Hamadan. He regretted being unable to execute the instructions in this new order 'with his usual promptitude, because of the very difficult journey, and, having been summoned to Isfahan the previous year by the Archbishop of Ancyra, he was detained by 'infirmary, old age and extreme poverty—wanting even for his daily bread, which for the 'previous 7 months had been charitably given him by the Portuguese Augustinian Fathers, 'and by debts of more than 3,000 scudi despite his economical mode of life.

'So he begged the favour might still be allowed him without any alteration, or else his 'oft-offered resignation accepted, or a coadjutor assigned him. . . ."

As to the suggestion to make an exchange of diocesan territory, Basra for Hamadan, on his part Bishop Elias was willing enough to agree, as can be seen from his comments, after his arrival in Rome, on the Bishop of Baghdad's request, which was considered in the session of the Sacr. Congregation of 4.9.1702:³

¹ Subsequent to the decree of 19.6.1696 quoted above, two others had been issued with regard to his residence: the first, of 14.4.1698, after repeating that he should reside in his diocese in some place most convenient to himself and his flock, had the qualification added by Cardinal Sacripante:

"If for any urgent reason he cannot return to his diocese, he may be allowed, for the time as long as that lasts, to 'remain outside his diocese, but it would be on his conscience as bishop. . . ." The other decree, of 24.8.1699, "on 'the occasion of the Bishop complaining that Basra, a place in his diocese, was not exchanged for Hamadan, situated 'in the diocese of Isfahan, and that he could not reside in any place among the Turks in Mesopotamia far from consuls 'of the "(i.e. protecting the) "Catholic missions without exposing the Christians there to evident danger of being oppressed 'and apostatizing," was as follows:

"If the true facts be as stated, he can—if it please our lord" (the Pope)—"be permitted to remain in Hamadan for '3 years and, as to the use of pontificals, he should obtain the consent of the Bishop of Isfahan: and in an audience 'given, 15.1.1701, His Holiness sanctioned it."

On the above minute, marked to Cardinal Imperiali, orders were passed that the Bishop of Isfahan, not yet arrived in Rome, should be awaited, and meanwhile search made for a coadjutor bishop for Mgr Pidou (*vide S.R.*, vol. 539, p. 256).

² *S.R.*, vol. 539, p. 255.

³ *Idem*, vol. 543, p. 502.

"As to my view requested on the desire expressed by the right reverend the Bishop of Baghdad that Hamadan, a town of our diocese of Persia, in which the said Bishop has a house for his residence, shall be declared to belong to his diocese of Baghdad, the exchange being made with the town of Basra, which is in his district and in which the Discalced Carmelites in turn have the house of their residence, I reply that this proposal had been elsewhere made to me by the right reverend bishop, and that I out of brotherly concord for our mutual convenience and because of the urgency of the reasons alleged for it freely gave my consent to it, as far as in me lay. The strongest ground for the convenience and urgency is that the Bishop of Baghdad, as he has no residence of his own either in Baghdad or Basra, in which he might dwell permanently, also does not seem able to acquire one: nor indeed in the opinion of the missionaries residing there can he stay there (Baghdad) openly exercising episcopal jurisdiction, without the gravest risks and harm being done. Since the Bishop of Baghdad can easily, as it were in passing, make a visit from Hamadan to Baghdad and other adjoining towns without any such risk, and similarly the Bishop of Isfahan visit Basra, if it should please your Eminences to agree to the convenience requested by the Bishop, by virtue of this answer I, as far as lies in me, declare my consent to it. . . . Yet in order to guard against quarrels and disputes, which might arise from an exchange so made, I consider that two precautions should be adopted in regard to it: (a) the Residence and mission at Hamadan, already established about 20 years ago by the right reverend François Picquet, should be declared to belong to the Bishop of Baghdad and jurisdiction over it declared to belong to him under no other title than as Bishop of Baghdad, so that *the missionaries from*" (the Seminary for Foreign Missions) "*Paris* or any persons whatever should not be able to make any claim to the said Residence and mission, (b) the extent of the country depending" (i.e. for episcopal jurisdiction) "on the town of Hamadan, and that of Basra should be limited to some furlongs thence, and to the neighbouring villages, to the exclusion of the towns which might sometimes be alleged to be in the districts of Hamadan and Basra, especially as these were royal cities or capitals. Fr. Elias of S. Albert."

Why, when the two bishops were in agreement, the alteration of boundaries was not authorized by the Sac. Congregation, does not appear on the record. On 4.9.1702 the Sac. Congregation issued the order:

"Let permission to reside in the town of Hamadan be prolonged for the term of another three years, and meanwhile conditions at Baghdad to be reported. . . ."¹

Some time between the end of 1702 (when a certain Fr. Amadeus Hamilton, an "English" Theatine, aged about 50, on his way to Goa, had been staying with Mgr Pidou for a year²) and the middle of 1706, therefore, the Bishop of Baghdad had gone back to Hamadan, where he still had the reverend Jean Baptiste Roc from the Seminary in Paris as his sole companion, and where, at the end of June 1706, he had consecrated as titular Bishop of Nicopolis the Carmelite Fr. Peter of Alcantara of S. Teresa. "But my black spouse of Babylon is more than ever inaccessible to me," he complained.³ In the next month, 21.7.1706, Bishop Pidou from Hamadan not only renewed his request for a coadjutor on account of his own age and infirmity, but asked particularly that Père Gratien de Galiczen, a priest of the diocese of Angers and doctor of the Sorbonne, aged over 40, might be selected.⁴ This proposal was considered at the session of the Congregation, 20.6.1707,⁵ and the order was passed:

"His Holiness to be prayed, as a favour, to name him as coadjutor, and, as for the suitable allowance to be assigned him, their Eminences the Prefect and Cardinal de la Trémoille to be asked their views."

¹ S.R., vol. 543.

⁴ S.R., vol. 559.

² *Idem*, p. 170.

⁵ S.N.R., II, p. 473.

³ S.N.R., II, p. 483, letter of 29.6.1706.

The Pope sanctioned the appointment, 27.6.1707, the sum of 300 scudi was to be reserved from the revenue of the diocese of Baghdad as salary, and a Brief was issued, 8.7.1707,¹ for the consecration as titular Bishop of Agathopolis of Mgr de Galiczen (who, 3.9.1708, wrote to the Sacr. Congregation expressing thanks for the honour bestowed and asking to be allowed to take a priest companion with him).²

At this point it is desirable to take notice of evidence of French influence trying to take hold in Persia. It was the period when Louis Quatorze was dominating the politics of Europe and making French activity felt in ecclesiastical affairs abroad, too. In 1706 there had been dispatched to Persia on behalf of the king of France an envoy named Jean Fabre; and his mission and that of Monsieur Michel who followed him are the subject of a graphic account, dated from Erivan, 9.7.1707,³ by the Bishop of Baghdad who, despite the infirmities which, he had repeatedly told the Sacr. Congregation, made travelling for him difficult, at the age of seventy years had been moved to make the long journey in the interests of his country and king:

“The harm, which has been caused in Persia by the extravagant proceedings and imprudences of the late *Sieur Jean Fabre*, sent by the king to the *Sufi*, is only too notorious and public, and has been unutterably prejudicial to the honour of France, and to the interests of the Catholic religion. The cause of so many horrible scandals has been the infamous French mistress, whom he brought to this country and whom he rashly passed off as sent by our princesses” (i.e. of France as a gift) “to the royal Haram. The governor” (at Erivan) “immediately gave the news to the *Sufi*” (i.e. the Shah), “a young prince given over to debauchery. But Divine Providence heard our sighs and our prayers, and had pity for the sake of all these missions which the wretched female had sworn to ruin, should she reach the throne of Persia, her mad ambition, since she aimed at nothing lower; for it allowed the Khan himself to fall in love with this painted fury and he, urged on to it by certain political considerations as well as jealousy, poisoned the said Fabre on the 17th August last” (1706). “After the death of that atheist, who died as he had lived, some fifteen Frenchmen who were (with him), among others his son Joseph, aged 14 years, and the *Sieur Jacques Fabre*, his nephew, having seen in his papers that I had been nominated by his Majesty to succeed him (Fabre) in case of his death” (i.e. as envoy) “wanted at once to summon me from Hamadan, my ordinary place of residence, more than 200 leagues away from here; but the Khan did not allow it until towards the end of the year, in order that the rains should render it morally impossible for me to make the journey. He wanted to put in the place of the dead man the little Joseph, a child good for nothing, as he” (the Khan) “had already written to his nephew, *’Itimad-ud-Dauleh*, the chief Wazir, that Madame the ‘pseudo-missive’ was the real ambassadress. . . . Whilst the Khan pretended to be waiting for a reply . . . there were some strange tragedies here, for that wretched woman, seeing herself despised by the French, stirred up the Khan against them, their Armenian purveyor was put in irons and died in prison, two other officials also were publicly hacked to pieces in front of the ‘Embassy’, their house was broken into and pillaged. Our Frenchmen were bound, garrotted and imprisoned together with the Jesuit Father Meunier, their chaplain: and finally they were all sent off to the Shah, under the tyrannical charge of the triumphant Amazon.

“Hardly were they outside the gate of Erivan than Monsieur Pierre Victor Michel, a person of talent, arrived there from Constantinople incognito together with one janissary and a dragoman, and he got in before them to Tabriz. The Marquis de Feriol, ambassador at the Ottoman Porte, who knew his ability tested in important errands in Spain and Hungary, had sent him off poste-haste from Constantinople with orders from the king to arrest the mistress and the paramour too, if he had found him alive. He (M. Michel) made himself known to, and recognized” (as duly empowered) “by all the Frenchmen . . . and after efforts and tirades the hussy was obliged to eat humble-pie.

¹ *Vide Hierarchy Latina Orientis*, No. 10, by late Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M.

² *S.R.*, vol 563, p. 424.

³ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 500.

"He" (M. Michel) "left" (Tabriz) "after Christmas (1706), together with all our" (French subjects) "to go and find the Shah, then at Tihiran, three days' distance from Qazwin: he had arranged with the governor at Tabriz that the good lady should remain there, on deposit as it were, until orders came from the Court: his plan was to come and, by turning off the road for some 20 leagues, pick me up at Hamadan in order that we might act in concert in accordance with the intentions of his Majesty (the king of France) specified in the instructions to the delegation: but, shortly afterwards he was obliged to change it and proceed direct to Qazwin, as he had learnt that, contrary to the promises given, they had put the courtesan on the road, and he ought not to let her get to the Shah before him. They arrived almost simultaneously in that town which is celebrated, but where there is no wine and the water is bad; and they were given separate quarters. He stayed there for more than three months, prevented under various pretexts from going to Court, the English and the Dutch having spent immense sums to prevent him from being received, until at last weary of all these intrigues he went there boldly, and some 300 men sent to bar his passage did not dare to attempt to do anything.

"He planted the banner of France in front of the tent of 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh: this minister would not see him, but caused him to be received with fair civility by some relatives and begged to return to Qazwin—for he ('Itimad-ud-Dauleh) said that the Sufi (the Shah) was on pilgrimage, and not receiving ambassadors: so he (M. Michel) was obliged to give way. However, the hussy had also come to Court, strongly recommended by the Khan of Erivan; but the pamphlets against her we had scattered about had given her such a bad name that the Shah did not want to see her. The grand Wazir had her taken to his 'Haram', and handed over to the Mihmandar with funds for her return journey as far as Erivan, and afterwards repatriated.

"When M. Michel got back to Qazwin, he there received instructions to betake himself too to Erivan: the presents from the king were half broken with so much transporting: and he was not allowed to pass by Hamadan: they gave him for Mihmandar a perfidious Armenian renegade, called Imam Quli Baig, an enemy of France and of Christians. Nevertheless, by spending money he" (M. Michel) "found means to inform me of everything, and to beg me to join him on the road to Tabriz, and with that object he sent me men, horses and money sufficient for the journey.

"The interests of the king and of religion caused me to make an effort, notwithstanding my age and infirmity; and at the end of April I joined him near Qazwin, seven days' distance from Hamadan: and I have accompanied him as far as here, but with difficulty, sometimes on horseback, at others in a litter on a camel, in great discomfort. In order to ruin us the renegade Mihmandar had us all arrested by the Khan of Erivan and then advised us to escape to Turkish territory; but we rejected this advice as cowardly and unworthy of an envoy of France, preferring to sacrifice ourselves for the honour of our great king. On our arrival at Tabriz, the 20th May (1707) we found there the *fatale nymphe*; and Monsieur Michel was so skilful as to get out of her a bond for 12,000 francs of the late Sieur Fabre's which she had and which might be useful to us here, by giving her other and useless papers and promising her 600 piastres for her return to France. We have been here since the 24th June, not in prison as we had been made to apprehend but absolutely free. By his prudent conduct Monsieur Michel has so calmed down the storm that we hope for a successful outcome of the business, if the Khan and the Persians do not deceive us. Our Mihmandar is in irons. . . . So there we are, thanks to God, delivered without noise and any violence from a horrible scandal, which would have been irreparable, if she had become a Muhammadan, as she had several times threatened. . . . On Tuesday on the repeated requests of Monsieur Michel the Khan had decapitated in public the perfidious Armenian renegade 'Zugli'¹ surnamed Imam Quli Baig, after the expulsion of the infamous mistress of the Sieur Fabre: that enemy of God and of France could have done great damage, after having already threatened and driven away from Julfa the eminent Shariman family, which had planted the Catholic Faith there. . . ."

¹ Presumably that *son-disant* 'Comte de Segli' mentioned on p. 484.

To Monsieur Michel is ascribed the obtaining of those *ragams* dated in the month Rajab 20 A.H., i.e. early in 1708, already noted in their specific connections—one for the repair of the convent of the Carmelites, another for the punishment of the Armenians who had ousted the Capuchins at Tiflis, the third for an enquiry into similar offences by Armenians at Tabriz.

The new coadjutor bishop, Mgr de Galiczen, who for most of the year 1710 had been waiting at Marseilles for a ship, at Smyrna in February 1711,¹ reached Erivan in the Caucasus before 21.9.1711, for on that day he wrote to the French ambassador at Constantinople, the Comte des Alleurs:² and he was in Isfahan before April 1712, for there is on record³ an

“Extract from the Decree of the king of Persia issued at the instances of M. Gratien de Galiczen, Bishop of Agathopolis, coadjutor of Babylon, for the peace and quiet of the Missions and the re-establishment of the articles of the treaty and those of the ‘Farman’ given in 1708 out of consideration for the ‘Emperor’ of France in favour of the Missions, which since have been disturbed by many acts of molestation and by a ‘farman’ obtained in 1710 by a stratagem by the patriarch and principal schismatic Armenians:

“We order and command all the Baiglarbaigis, governors, officials and magistrates of our empire to recognize the said treaty, its ordinances and instructions in every thing—in fact to pay respect to all the Fathers and other persons whatsoever who live in all our empire under the protection of the “Emperor” of France, and not to permit anyone among the Muhammadans or Armenians or of any other nation to cause them the slightest annoyance or injury.

“And you, O lieutenant of the province of Azarbaijan, are to have escorted by some person under your direction to Hamadan, the Father,⁴ whom the ambassador has left in the city of Tabriz. And you, O governor of the town of Hamadan, when the said Father has reached Hamadan, are to have immediately escorted to Isfahan by some Mihmandar among your subordinates Mgr Pidou the Bishop, so that things may be done in the way the “Emperor” of France has given instructions, and there is no departure from his orders. Given on the 30th of the month of Rabi’ I 1124,” = 29th April 1712. (Seal of ‘Itimad-ud-Dauleh.)

But, tragically enough for those who had counted on his efforts to improve the situation, Mgr de Galiczen died 22.9.1712:⁵

“There had already died in the month of September Monsignor the Bishop of Agathopolis, who had played here the part of ambassador⁶ to the very great advantage and profit of the missions”;

and the unfortunate Bishop of Baghdad, who had so many years pleaded for a coadjutor and at last obtained an energetic man chosen by himself, did not even see him alive: he had travelled from Hamadan to welcome Mgr de Galiczen only to arrive at Julfa the day after his burial. Mgr Pidou de St. Olon had another motive for undertaking the journey from Hamadan to Isfahan: he had been appointed “consul for France” (though possibly the commission was that reversionary appointment and nomination brought by the envoy Fabre in 1707). The letter quoted continued:

¹ S.R., vol. 573, pp. 333–353, and S.N.R., III, p. 381.

² S.R., vol. 581.

³ S.N.R., III, p. 389: no Persian original is filed of this in the Archives of Prop. Fide, but only the Italian version.

⁴ His name was Abbé Rebusat, evidently the priest Bishop Galiczen wished to bring.

⁵ S.R., vol. 589, letter of 23.10.1712, Fr. Barnabas, O.P.

⁶ However, the Comte des Alleurs took umbrage at this role played by the Bishop, writing to the Sac. Congregation, 17.1713 (S.R., vol. 589):

“From Persia . . . I am informed that the grand patriarch of the Armenians leaves nothing undone to persecute the missionaries and Latins: I wrote several times on this subject to ‘Itimad-ud-Dauleh, chief Minister of the Sufi: my first letters were suppressed by the late Bishop of Agathopolis, who without authority” (‘lightly’) “had assumed the character of ambassador from the King to that Court.”

"Now there has betaken himself to the capital Mgr Pidou, who has become consul for the French nation, having been nominated and appointed by the Most Christian king: and he has already presented himself to the sovereign, who received him with much courtesy; but up till now he has not taken up the role, though it is expected that on the return of the king from the villa, where he went last week, he will be accepted and treated as consul. For it is very necessary that some representative of a Catholic sovereign should be here in order to support the missions, missionaries and Catholics: otherwise all will go to ruin. It is indeed true that Mgr Pidou in my opinion cannot do much in view of his decrepitude from old age,¹ and the poverty in which he is at present. To deal with this Court pluck and courage are needed. . . ."

A few days later, 7.11.1712, the same writer² informed Cardinal Sacripante that on the Wednesday of the week before SS. Simon and Jude (Oct. 28th)—doubtless with regard to the letters from Rome brought with Mgr de Galiczen—Mgr Pidou had audience of Shah Sultan Husain, who

"retained him to lunch with him, as is the custom, together with his two companions, i.e. Fr. Peter, the Capuchin missionary from Tabriz and Monsieur Richard, a French missionary priest, who is due³ to take back the replies from the Shah to the king of France."

The dilatoriness of the Persian Court was then indescribable. On 25.3.1713 the Dominican Vicar Apostolic expressed anxiety⁴ lest the Shah should not return an answer to the king of France: he wrote:

"already five months have passed since the letters were presented:⁵ for, if the Shah give replies, he will have to grant a *raqam* in favour of the missionaries, and at present the schismatics have held one for three years past,"

and it was 2.10.1713⁶ when he could at length report:

"the chief Minister of State has at last replied to the two letters written to him by the ambassador of France at Constantinople about the affairs of the mission and the 'Franks'. As I had already stated in my letter of last month, the reply then is to the effect that, if the king of France will send here the merchant company as arranged mutually five or six years ago, the Shah will cause to be put into effect the *raqams* given at the request both of the Bishop of Agathopolis and of M. Michel, as also all the terms settled with M. Michel; but that, if the king of France will not send the Company, everything will be done to the contrary. According to what is said by all the French (here), the Most Christian King is not in a position at present to send the Company in question. . . ."

The Dominican writer mentioned in a further letter of 7.3.1714⁷ that the chief Wazir, 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, had sent for Mgr Pidou as consul for France and told him that the Shah was tired of being hoodwinked with the promises of the king of France for the establishment of the French company and, unless such a company soon began to function, all missionaries would be expelled: the minister complained, too, of the great expense incurred by the Persian Court in entertaining a succession of French ambassadors without any result.

Mgr Pidou, in fact,

¹ He was then over 76 years old.

² S.R., vol. 589, 23.10.1712, Fr. Barnabas, O.P.

³ He left at end May 1713 for Erivan and France (S.R., vol. 593, p. 155).

⁴ S.R., vol. 589.

⁵ By 29.1.1714 Mgr Pidou had still taken no steps in his position as French consul for the benefit of the missions at Tabriz, etc.—"these Persians have not yet agreed to accept him as such" (see S.N.R., III, p. 436).

⁶ S.R., vol. 574.

⁷ *Idem*, vol. 597, p. 506.

'had returned to the hospice of the Carmelites at Julfa, as he was not in a condition to return to Hamadan—not only because of his decrepitude, he being over 78 years of age, but also because he was practically unable to sit a horse any more: and Hamadan lay ten 'days' journey distant from Isfahan.'¹

At a meeting of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 24.7.1714:

"Cardinal Sacripante the Prefect reported that Mgr Pidou, Bishop of Baghdad, being 'unable to reside in that city on account of the barbarities of the Turks had been residing at Hamadan, whence having gone to Isfahan on the summons of the king he was unable to return there (to Hamadan) by reason of his great age—above 78 years: . . . for which cause he (Mgr Pidou) desires another coadjutor. . . .'"²

On 18.9.1714, indeed, the Carmelite Fr. Jerome Francis had written³ to the Cardinal Prefect:

"Your Eminence will be aware that for two years past Mgr the Bishop of Baghdad has 'been lodged in our convent in Isfahan . . . besides other misfortunes, which have happened to him, he has fallen into the direst poverty, because he did not receive from France his allowances which were substantial. . . . On the 29th of last month' (August 1714) 'he became paralysed in half his body. . . . We have lent him 20 Tumans to pay his debts, taking them from the fund for our Residence at Julfa. . . .'"

But it was at a session of the Congregation almost a year later, 25.5.1715, that:

"They" (the Congregation) "dealt with the election of a coadjutor for the Bishop of Baghdad and agreed in proposing Fr. Timothy de la Flèche, a Capuchin: and therefore the same day they issued this decree: 'In view of the great age and ill health of Aloysius Maria Pidou, Bishop of Baghdad or Babylon . . . the most eminent Fathers decided to pray His Holiness to depute Fr. Timothy de la Flèche born in France, of the Capuchin Order (who for several years had held the office of Procurator for the brethren of his Order in the kingdom of France appointed to the sacred missions in infidel regions, and of consulator of the Sacr. Congregation of Rites for the canonization of saints, who at present is Definitor General of his Order and is highly recommended for his piety, zeal, teaching and other good qualities) as coadjutor of the Bishop of Baghdad or Babylon, to have the title and character of a bishop. . . . This opinion of the Sacr. Congregation His Holiness graciously approved and he ordered that the Briefs appropriate to this matter should be dispatched.'"⁴

The Brief for Fr. Timothy, elected Bishop of Beryta, was issued, 29.5.1715: there is on record a letter from him,⁵ dated Paris, 16.9.1715, in which he mentioned that he had been pressed to start on his journey; but in a reply to Cardinal de la Trémoille from Vannes, 19.8.1716, the new Bishop of Beryta asked to be allowed to re-enter his cloister on account of his age and a terrible fear of sea-sickness, or to retain his pension in the abbey of S. Vuart d'Aras (and copies of letters from Cardinal de Boissy and others were enclosed):⁶ another reference in the *Acta* for the year 1718, p. 81, speaks also of a serious illness, from which he was not recovered, and therefore he resigned his coadjutorship.⁷ Finally the Secretary of State wrote to him, 29.3.1718:

¹ S.R., vol. 593, p. 568.

² Quoted by the late Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M., in his *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, 1622–1922, No. 10.

³ S.N.R., III, p. 70.

⁵ S.R., vol. 601, p. 471.

⁴ See *Hierarchia Latina Orientis* quoted above.

⁶ S.N.R., III, p. 89.

⁷ See also S.R., vol. 680, p. 487: 'he had been many times warned to set out, and not obeyed the canons and decrees of Alexander VII'.

"... I have next the pleasure to inform your lordship that His Holiness, relaxing with fatherly indulgence the decrees already notified to you, deigns to allow you to continue to wear episcopal dress and to celebrate Mass in vestments (but not to pontificate) while "you may go on living among your Religious."¹

Before that resignation, however, on 20.11.1717, Fr. Jerome, Prior of the Carmelites, wrote to the Cardinal Prefect²

"to give the news of the death of the illust. and most reverend Mgr Louis Marie Pidou, Bishop of Baghdad, which occurred yesterday in our convent at Isfahan. When Monsieur Jean Richard, the missionary from Paris, came here with the letters from the Pope to the king of Persia, the deceased prelate had devised to him in his will his house at Hamadan with all its effects; but after the departure of M. Richard, he cancelled that testamentary arrangement by another deed and left both his house at Hamadan and his other property to the person, whom the Sacr. Congregation should designate either as his coadjutor or as his successor in the bishopric of Baghdad. As the bishop was in great need, we assisted him as much as we could and, besides the 20 Tumans formerly given him on loan from our allowances we have lent him up to now 14 Tumans: so we humbly beg your Eminence that . . . the Sacr. Congregation will repay that sum. . . ."

The venerable prelate was over 81 years of age and for some 25 years had been a bishop during the whole of which period he did not leave Persia: with him, save for an interlude of a few days shortly to be recorded, finished that long residence in Persia of successive bishops consecrated to govern the distant diocese of Mesopotamia: another quarter of a century was to pass before there was again consecrated a bishop of Baghdad.³

As to the interests of France in Persia, of which Bishop Pidou de St. Olon had been an exponent, it may be of interest to quote the following translation from the Italian of a letter written by king Louis Quatorze, 25.9.1714, not long before his death, to Pope Clement XI⁴—the Nuncio in Paris reported in several communications his representations to the 'Grand Monarque' on behalf of the missionaries in Persia:

"Holy Father, We have received the Brief which Your Holiness had written to us on the 28th July, and We have had much pleasure from it, since it contains the testimony that You give to Our zeal for the propagation of the Faith. We shall still not leave anything undone to contribute, as far as it depends on Us, to the maintenance and establishment of the missions in the kingdom of Persia, and You should be convinced that We shall continue to be animated by the same sentiments of association with Your pious intention for the greatest glory of God, and the weal of our religion.

¹ His pension was also continued him.

² *S.N.R.*, III, p. 463

³ For any help that it may be to anyone writing a life of Bishop Pidou (as has been done in the case of two of his predecessors) the following references of letters in the archives of Propaganda Fide—not by any means exhaustive—are given: Letters of Mgr Louis M. Pidou de St. Olon: 28.7.1673, Rome, *S.R.*, vol. 441, p. 92; 20.10.1684, Diarbakr, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 439; 11.12.1684, Baghdad, *S.N.R.*, I, p. (?); 13.12.1686, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 479; 10.10.1687, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, p. (?); 19.2.1688, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, p. (?); 31.1.1689, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509; 24.7.1689, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509; 14.4.1690, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509, 30.6.1690, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509, 16.11.1690, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509; 23.12.1690, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, I, *post* p. 509; 24.1.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, I, p. (?); 28.3.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 1; 21.4.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 3; 22.9.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 11; 9.10.1691, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. (?); 26.9.1692, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. (?); 1.10.1692, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 70, 8.3.1694, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 97; 29.6.1694, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 104; 6.8.1694, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 106; 23.4.1695, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 129; 25.10.1695, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 219; 23.1.1697, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 180; 30.11.1697, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 205; 11.8.1699, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 279; 10.11.1699, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 287, 24.11.1699, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. (?); 27.11.1699, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 389; 27.7.1700, Isfahan, *S.R.*, vol. 539, p. 255, 15.9.1700, Isfahan, *S.R.*, vol. 539, p. 256; 19.7.1702, Isfahan, *S.R.*, vol. 545, p. 413; 29.6.1706, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 483; 21.7.1706, Isfahan, *S.R.*, vol. 559; 9.7.1707, Erivan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 510; 12.4.1708, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 1; 3.5.1709, Hamadan, *S.N.R.*, III, p. (?); 23.10.1711, Hamadan, *S.R.*, vol. 587, p. 28, 11.1.1713, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 402; 11.3.1713, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, III, p. 408; 12.3.1713, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 410; 25.9.1714, Isfahan, *S.N.R.*, III, p. 75.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 448.

"We pray the Divine Providence, Most Holy Father, to preserve for long a Pope so worthy to govern his Church,

"Written at Fontainebleau 25th September 1714,

"Your devoted Son, the king of France and Navarre, Louis."

There had been a native Persian envoy in France, during the last years of the 'Grand Monarque', and of his exploits an interesting contemporary account has been published: the French cardinal de la Trémoille had asked for the release of the Georgian prince, Vaqtan or Actanga: in reciprocity it had been decided to dispatch as resident consul in Isfahan a civilian and secular: while a letter of that Monsieur l'Abbé Richard of the Seminary for Foreign Missions, whose name has already been cited as having been a short while in Persia, 26.12.1715, speaks¹ of:

"... Monseigneur the Duke of Orleans" (i.e. the Regent) "being favourably disposed . . . he has confirmed in the appointment as consul for the whole of Persia Monsieur Gardanne de Sainte Croix, and caused him to set out a few days ago. . . ."

Of this successor to Bishop Pidou as consul for France a glimpse is given in the diary of the Residence of the Carmelites at Aleppo² for 1716, which sheds light on conditions under which European trading communities worked in Turkish towns during those years of strained relations in Europe: for, after Charles XII of Sweden had been vanquished at Poltava and sought refuge in Turkey, in 1711 the Turks had marched into Moldavia to meet the troops of Peter the Great, and they compelled the Czar to surrender with all his army on the right bank of the Pruth, with the result that Azof had to be relinquished: in 1715 Daud 'Ali Pasha took back the Morea from the Venetians: in the following year, viz. 1717, Prince Eugene laid siege to Belgrade:³

"Towards the end of this year" (1716) "there arrived here" (i.e. in Aleppo) "Monsieur de Gardanne with his brother and four other persons in his service. This gentleman was 'being sent to Persia by the king of France with the style of an 'ambassador', and orders 'to remain there afterwards as 'Resident' or 'Agent' of the French Company, which was to 'be established there: and he had instructions from the Court not to disclose to anyone 'where he was going or why he was going, the conviction being that it was possible by 'means of secrecy to pass with safety through the Turkish dominions without being stopped 'or molested as had occurred on other occasions with such personages.

"After stopping for two months in Aleppo he pretended that he was going to stay with 'his suite in a garden" (i.e. outside the town) "where he remained for some time, occupying 'himself in the chase and other recreations, meantime providing his party with clothes 'after the costume of the country, good horses, and men accustomed to the journey he 'was going to make. At last one night, everything necessary having been got ready, he 'left suddenly with all his suite and a Capuchin Lay Brother, who was also going to Persia. "When the news of this spread later among the 'Franks' they all praised his method of 'procedure as being that of a prudent man. But all that device and cunning availed them 'nothing, because such a flight becoming immediately known some of the notables of the

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 603, p. 344.

² *Études Carmelitaines*, January-June 1925, p. 162.

³ In his Brief of 10.10.1722 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 99, p. 98 *et seq.*) Pope Innocent XIII. sounded the tocsin of alarm over Malta to the Emperor, to the kings of France, Spain and Poland, to the Republic of Venice, Genoa and the Swiss cantons:

"... super speculum Domini sumus et super custodiam Nostram ut, cum viderimus gladium venientem, buccina insonemus et excitemus robustos et bellatores ut aemulatores sint legis, et exurgant in proelium pro domo Dei. Cum igitur grave bellum ab immanitate Turcarum Christiano populo instare luculentis indicibus conjiciamus ac jure vereamur ne primo tempore terras et insulas Christianorum invadere ac Melitensibus potissimum de Christiano nomine optime meritis obsidionem incursionemque moliantur, Christianorum principum subsidium operamque paterna sollicitudine requirimus, ne videamus factam in conculcationem et sponsam Christi in luctum et humilitatem. Armis enim et potentia quibus eos ornavit et instruxit Princeps regum terrae septem esse voluit vineam Suam ne fieret hostibus in directionem . . ."

"town collected and dispatched a band of soldiers to look for them who after 20 days' march finally caught up with them forcing them to surrender and despoiled them of everything, binding them and ill-treating them, tied them together, two and two on horses, and to their great discomfort and suffering brought them back to Aleppo. Just as great as the delight of the Turks at seeing such a capture was the shame and sorrow of the Franks, especially as they were at once placed in a fort and confined in strict and very painful imprisonment. The consul for the French did not leave untried any possible way to make the Turks understand that this was a great injustice, and that they ought not thus to treat the subjects of their king; but they did not listen to him, the Turks replying that these people were not French, but spies for the Emperor and the Venetians, with whom at that time the Grand Signor was at war, and that they would not release them or let them go until the Porte, which had been notified of the matter, had decided what should be done. Both parties, in fact, wrote to Constantinople about this business: as the result of which not a long interval occurred before a *kapiji* came with orders to take the prisoners thither well pinioned, which would have been done with every rigour, had not the French community managed to win over the *kapiji* with various presents. . . . What afterwards happened at Constantinople we have not been able to learn, but we have only understood from our Fathers in Persia that in the following year" (1717) "Monsieur de Gardanne arrived there with his suite and was very well received by the Shah. . . ."¹

As to his mission, however, it was elsewhere alleged not to have prospered, a communication dated 14.10.1718² to the Sac. Congregation from Galata (Constantinople) reading:

" . . . Monsieur de Gardanne has not been fortunate in his mission: he had audience twice of the Shah, who treated him passably well; but 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, the chief minister, did not do the like. He was unwilling to grant the conditions and terms that their ambassador had done in France, saying that he claimed that the treaty concluded by Monsieur Michel should be executed, after which he sent a *raqam* or order for the confirmation of the treaty without consenting to give a copy of the *raqam*. Afterwards he" (the Wazir) "sent away that gentleman to Isfahan quicker than he wished, saying that, if those merchants" (i.e. the French Company) "did not come within two years, affairs would fall out badly for him and for all the French in that country. I think Your Eminence will have already learnt that there was a rising in Isfahan against the Shah and king of Persia, who went off to another town ten days away,³ where M. de Gardanne went to have audience and thence the chief Minister sent him back to Isfahan. . . ."

Not such an unfavourable aspect is put on the Persian attitude in a letter of 24.9.1718 by the Dominican Vicar Apostolic in Persia: it is evident that the French Government was doing everything possible to make for friendly relations, though the particular insistence of the powerful Minister on a French company of merchants being established in Persia in opposition to the Dutch and English interests is not easily explicable:⁴ replying to Cardinal de la Trémoille about a request to transmit a sum to the Vicar Apostolic in Isfahan, 10.2.1712, the 'Directors' Generals at Paris of the Compagnie Royale des Indes Orientales de France regretted their

¹ At Aleppo that year, 1716, on there being solemn exequies in the French churches there in commemoration of the death of Louis XIV, and a great crowd of Christians from the country, especially women, gathering, this offended the Turks, and caused the Carmelite mission great trouble; for on the following Sunday the Pasha sent Janissaries to all the churches of the Franks and imprisoned two or three of the Christians of each community, and made their representatives pay a heavy fine of 3 purses.

² Signed by a certain Domenico della Rocca, S.N.R., II, p. 471.

³ This was Tihran.

⁴ In his edition (1740) of Fr. Krusinski's *Memoirs*, Fr. du Cerceau claimed of Fath 'Ali Khan, 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, that: "He liked all Europeans in general, but particularly the French, to whom he endeavoured to procure the preference in trade over the other European Factories: and this he did not only out of an inclination to them, but much more for a reason of state, having an idea that the too great privileges granted by Shah 'Abbas to those companies were prejudicial to the kingdom."

inability', for they had "no establishment at Isfahan, nor at any other place in Persia." Fr. Barnabas Fedeli in that letter had written:

" 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, the chief Minister of state of the monarch, has received from the minister of the Most Christian King letters of compliment and great cordiality. . . .

" . . . Beside the two letters written by the ambassador of the king of France at Constantinople to 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, last week there arrived one from the Comte de Pontchartrain, minister of state of the Most Christian King, very polite and full of courteous expressions, which he conveyed to 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh on behalf of the Most Christian King, and assuring him that he" (Comte de Pontchartrain) "wished to dispatch the promised company of merchants immediately peace was settled, and that meanwhile he was sending a large war-vessel to the port of Mukha and had given orders that, as soon as the business there was settled, that vessel escorted by other ships should proceed to the Persian coast and place itself at the disposal of the Shah. These steps, which have been much appreciated in this capital, lead us to hope that we should find it favourable to us and be able to enjoy a little quiet. . . . Since I wrote the above I hear that rumour has spread in the city that the French warship mentioned has arrived at Bandar 'Abbas, a port 25 days away from this city. . . ."

There had been a succession of French East India companies, replacing one another, the fifth under the minister Colbert in 1644: and in 1719 a sixth was launched on a combination of various interests. No doubt it was to that of 1644, the fifth, to which reference was made in that remark by the Carmelite Vicar Provincial, Fr. Faustin, in his letter of 1719 already quoted:¹

" . . . we are in great poverty . . . because of the *bankruptcy* of the French company, in which this mission had more than 7,000 rupees' capital . . . now for 9 years past not a farthing has been got from it. . . ."

It has been mentioned too that the French Carmelite, Fr. Jerome Francis, had been dispatched to Paris in 1719, in order to recover as much as possible of the sum lost: in a letter written by him while in Paris, 13.10.1720,² to the Cardinal Prefect, he spoke of the:

" . . . Comte de Toulouse" (one of natural sons of Louis XIV) "a prince with great fervour for the Catholic religion, who has greatly helped me in the commission entrusted to me. . . ."

There had been, moreover, an attempt at the aggrandizement of French influence in another sphere—by the ecclesiastics in Paris to make the direction of missionary enterprise in Persia an appanage of France, just as there was already secured to them an exclusive claim to the bishopric of Baghdad.

Notice has been taken in these pages of the specific objection by Bishop Elias of Isfahan himself a French-speaking Walloon by race) to the activities of the Seminary for Foreign Missions, Paris, a number of whose graduates were in turn assigned to Mgr Pidou as his chaplains, at his expense: and in this Bishop Elias but followed Mgr Pidou himself, who in several letters complained of their ways.³

When the death of Bishop Elias became known, there was submitted from Paris to the sac. Congregation de Prop. Fide a long statement⁴ (emanating either from the Seminary at Paris, or from the Jesuits):

"Information regarding the bishops of Babylon and their jurisdiction in Persia."

¹ O.C.D. 242 b.

² S.N.R., III, p. 504.

³ "These gentlemen, whom they send him and who are always coming and going, are the cause of his poverty, always running up debts, and few of them succeed in missionizing in these parts," wrote Fr. Jerome Francis, French himself, N.R., II, p. 70, 18.9.1714.

⁴ S.N.R., III, p. 14.

Sozomen, Eusebius, the Bollandists, Tillemont were invoked to show that under the Sasanian dynasty of Persia the see of Babylon [*? sic*] was pre-eminent—much in the same way as in the 1660's Bishop du Chemin of Baghdad had the ambition to be named patriarch besides retaining joint control of the sees of Baghdad and Isfahan.

This was followed, 15.9.1710, by an exhaustive treatise¹ from the pen of Père Jacques Villotte of the Jesuits, who had been for a brief time at Julfa in their mission: he now styled himself 'Procurator General of the French bishops and vicars apostolic in Eastern Asia' and, writing on behalf of the coadjutor Bishop of Baghdad, went on to claim that the first Bishop of Babylon was also Bishop of Isfahan!¹, seizing on the clerical error of the Bull in the case of Mgr du Chemin—"Babyloniensis seu Aspahamensis", already exploded and dismissed as of no signification by the Sacr. Congregation of the Council, as has been seen. On that wrong premiss Père Villotte went on to propose to the Sacr. Congregation de Prop. Fide that the bishopric of Isfahan should be "re-united" to that of Baghdad, or, at least, Mgr Pidou made Vicar Apostolic of the former,

"in order to give greater support to the missionaries in Persia—the Most Christian King" (i.e. Louis Quatorze) "has sent him a commission as consul of the French in Isfahan—or 'else they' (the Sacr. Congregation) "should make his coadjutor, Mgr the Bishop of 'Agathopolis, vicar apostolic" (for the diocese of Isfahan). "*His Most Christian Majesty desiring this favour*, as he has caused a petition to be made to His Holiness, and as in his "name the Cardinal de la Trémoille also begs."

Already in its session of 16.12.1709² Cardinal Sacripante, the Prefect of the Sacr. Congregation, reported that:

"Monsignor the Nuncio in Paris has transmitted to his Eminence Cardinal Paulucci a "communication sent by Mgr Pidou de St. Olon, Bishop of Baghdad, in which he begs "His Holiness and this Congregation to *invest once more his diocese*" (i.e. Baghdad) "with the "jurisdiction that it has in Persia, and especially in Isfahan, because after the new bishop" (i.e. Mgr Elias) "was given to that city, he (Mgr Pidou) retired to Hamadan . . . and now, "the see of Isfahan being vacant, he believes that together with his coadjutor he will be "able to supply the need without any new election being required. . . . As therefore the "see of Isfahan is vacant by the death of Mgr Elias, should your Eminences not judge it "well to proceed to the election of a new bishop, they are begged to state (a) whether there "is not occasion for the reuniting of the sees of Isfahan and Baghdad: and, should they "not be inclined to accede to the request of Mgr Pidou, (b) whether, in order to provide "for the spiritual needs, your Eminences would think fit to declare as vicar apostolic, or "as administrator of Isfahan with a limited jurisdiction Mgr the Bishop of Agathopolis, "coadjutor of Mgr Pidou, as was done in the year 1638 with Fr. Bernard, (c) if so, to fix "the place of residence of such a vicar apostolic. . . ."

Although it was of the end of this century that it has been calculated that seventy per cent of the nominations to bishoprics were made, or desired, by temporal princes and not the Pope, small wonder that to such political, ambitious pressure of a nationalist complexion the Congregation of Propaganda Fide reacted. To those who have read the history of the first appointment of Bishop John Thaddeus in 1632 a proposal to "unite" Baghdad and Isfahan (which lay in two different, and usually hostile states) was preposterous on historical grounds, and fantastic for practical reasons. The reply of the Cardinals to the first proposition was, therefore, altogether negative:

"Let there be no innovation,"

¹ S.R., vol. 573, pp. 333-53.

² *Vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10, by Fr. L. Lemmens.

and to the second:

“Let a Vicar Apostolic be appointed, and as to the person, let it be at the selection of
“His Eminence the Prefect.”

For nearly a year the matter stayed at that (except that the Carmelite Fr. John Baptist of S. Teresa, brother of the Praepositus General of the time, aged 43 and on his way as a missionary to the dominions of the Great Mogul was proposed as Vicar Apostolic,¹ but he had had only six months' experience of Persia): at that date the number of Carmelites in Persia had fallen to a handful, either very old men or recent arrivals: and, when eventually

“in the session of the Congregation, 15.10.1710, Cardinal Sacripante brought up the
“question afresh, it was decided: ‘To depute a Vicar Apostolic in the person of Fr. Barnabas
“‘Fedeli, of Milan. . . .’
“ . . . and, 16.10.1710, His Holiness approved, a Brief being issued, 5.9.1711.”

Belonging to a patrician family of Milan—his brothers Conte Giuseppe and Conte Francesco,² nephew Conte Gianantonio, are mentioned—it appears that before becoming a Dominican Fr. Barnabas Fedeli had been proposed as Bishop of Assisi by a certain cardinal to Pope Innocent XII, but had declined to accept.³ Whether then aged 40 (i.e. born 1663) or 36 (i.e. born 1667),⁴ two distinct sources⁵ mention him on 23.7.1703, when with a Fr. Egidius, O.P., he was one of two Dominican Religious “destined for the mission in Persia” and by a decree of the Sacr. Congregation of that day,⁶ signed by Cardinal Carlo Barberini the Prefect,

“on the proposal of Mgr Carlo Fabroni the Secretary, Fr. Barnabas Fedeli of the Dominican
“Congregation of Santa Sabina of Lombardy was declared an apostolic missionary in
“Persia for the period of seven years, to be under the direction of the Bishop of Isfahan or
“of his Vicar General, whom he must obey in everything, and he will receive the necessary
“faculties. . . .”

There was no further mention of him observed—perhaps he was not dispatched to Persia in 1703—until in 1709⁷ the Master General of the Order reported (when suggesting names of candidates suitable for the archbishopric of Nakhchiwan) that he had

“later spoken to Fr. Barnabas from Milan, Prior of the convent of S. Sabina in Rome,
“and I found him with a little knowledge of the Armenian language . . .⁸ and ready to
“obey orders. . . .”

Then, 27.3.1709, together with two other Dominicans he petitioned the Sacr. Congregation to select him as a missionary to Greater Armenia: and it was stated, 10.6.1709,⁹ that faculties had been granted him: on 14.8.1710 there is a letter from him stating that he was still at Venice waiting for a ship, and wanted the money for a passage advanced.

This prominence suddenly given to the Dominicans in the Persian capital, as apart from their province of Nakhchiwan, requires a brief explanation of their position since it was noted under the reign of Shah Sulaiman that a Dominican hospice had been opened at Julfa about

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 573, p. 343.

² *S.N.R.*, III, p. 506; *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 550.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 569, p. 1.

⁴ and ⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 569, and *Idem*, vol. 545, p. 480.

⁶ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 446.

⁷ *S.R.*, vol. 565 (or 568), *post* p. 385.

⁸ This indicates he had either been already at Nakhchiwan and returned to Rome, or else had studied Armenian in Rome.

⁹ *S.R.*, vol. 569, and vol. 567, p. 280.

1684 with one Armenian priest, but abandoned from 1688 to 22.9.1691 when a Fr. Hyacinth David was posted there, and their church was built, largely at the expense of Gaspar Shariman. He had been joined before 1695 by a Bolognese, Fr. John Bartholomew,¹ who, 11.9.1697, addressed the Sacr. Congregation,² stating that he wished to establish a convent in Julfa, where youths could be educated in the Observance. In former times, he wrote, an attempt had been made to form a sort of college in the province of Nakhchiwan, Religious having been sent for the purpose from Europe, but it had not taken root, chiefly because of exactions by the 'Turks' (=Persians?) and of the manual labour done by the friars. He thought that such a noviciate could best be set up in Isfahan, where some European Fathers could be dispatched and, when they knew Armenian sufficiently, teach philosophy and history to Armenian youths. A grant from the Sacr. Congregation would be required to maintain two or three Religious; but the Sacr. Congregation already possessed a fund collected to found a college for Armenians. On that the Master General of the Order wrote in a memorandum that the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan (to whom the Order annually paid 200 scudi) and Fathers in that province desired a hospice in Isfahan for four to six missionaries, but had no money for the purpose; though Gaspar Shariman had obtained them a house, the two Religious in Julfa were existing in misery on alms—their only income 40 scudi paid by Gaspar. As to the noviciate in Nakhchiwan the Master General considered the youths should then pass on to study philosophy in Rome: he had already discussed the placing of such a noviciate in Rome. Thereupon the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation minuted that a college for Armenians had actually been started in Rome; but, the results expected not having been realized, it had been afterwards transferred to Leopoli in Poland. Yield on the investment or fund collected by the former Archbishop, Mgr Cittadini, on special authorization by Brief had never exceeded 529 scudi and in 1697 produced only 353 scudi, so that the Sacr. Congregation had had to pay 600 scudi to make up the deficiency. The result is to be read in a note addressed, 21.2.1699, by the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation to Fr. John Bartholomew of S. Hyacinth in the form of a decree,³ dated 9.2.1699:

"To his Eminence Cardinal Sacripante, who will be so good as to concert with the
 "Father General (of the Dominicans) for the extension and establishment of the new
 "Hospice at Isfahan or Julfa of his Order, where he will allow and grant the General that
 "a noviciate may now be set up, and also a house of study for teaching Armenian youths,
 "both those in religion and seculars. To this end the Father General after consulting the
 "Vicar Provincial of the Congregation of S. Sabina of the province of Lombardy will
 "propose three Religious distinguished in learning and religious spirit and other suitable
 "qualities to be transferred there" (to Julfa) "from that Congregation, and not to be moved
 "thence without consulting the Sacr. Congregation. . . ."

From that time onwards the Sacr. Congregation, as appears from the records, took a particular interest in the Dominican Fathers at Julfa, although the proposed noviciate seems never to have gone beyond a school similar to that of the Carmelites, but smaller. Two references in letters of Fr. John Bartholomew⁴ allude to the building of the Dominican church in Julfa being begun and finished by Gaspar Shariman: two others mention that the Sharimans were then busy adorning and embellishing the Dominican church and, 30.10.1706,⁵ that:

"besides the buildings of our House, done for us by 'Count' Shariman, his brother Nazar
 "for the greater convenience and security of the first has added and connected to it another,
 "having on the garden side a covered way or passage. . . . We are really greatly obliged
 "to these gentlemen for having so aided us, and embellished the church, so that the one

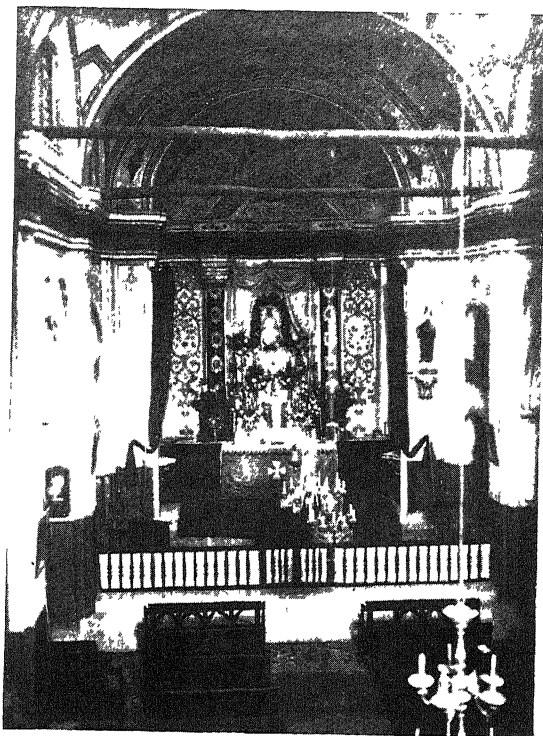
¹ *S.N.R.*, II, *post* p. 116, 18.3.1695.

² *S.R.*, vol. 532, p. 208, 11.9.1697, he did so again, asking a grant, 31.5.1698, *S.R.*, vol. 533, p. 270.

³ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 228.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 322.

⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 550, p. 290; *Idem*, vol. 559, p. 549.



INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE DOMINICANS AT JULFA

First erected 1697 and now used by the Catholic Armenians. (Taken 1933 during
a May when the painting of S. Dominic over the altar is hidden by the statue of
the Blessed Virgin, and drapery)

"might pass among the commodious convents and the other among the fine churches of Europe: Deo gratias!"

This is stated by the Priests of the Mission (i.e. the Lazarist or Vincentian Fathers) to be the church in which they officiated down till 1935—the sole edifice standing of the four Catholic and Uniat churches in Julfa of the 17th and 18th centuries, doubtless much altered by repairs in the interval.

But "Fr. Bartholomew, the Dominican from Rome, a missionary here, was strangled at night and his house ransacked" was the regrettable news one Carmelite later had to tell.¹

"It is true that through the death of Fr. Bartholomew the Dominican House here was "in danger of falling into the hands of the 'Turks' " (i.e. Muslims) "for they wanted to be placed in charge of it, and at least to put a seal on everything. But I . . . have preserved the house . . . and kept in deposit with the Jesuit Fathers a list of everything inventoried "by Fr. Columban, the Discalced Carmelite,"

wrote the Vicar General, who was an Augustinian, two years later.² But by that time four Dominican Fathers, as arranged by the Master General, had been selected, and were ready to start from Italy in 1701,³ three of them, Frs. Peter Martyr from Parma, Archangelo Ferri from Brescia and Antoninus from Poschiavo will often be found mentioned in the archives, the first in fact being in after years and successively nominated Archbishops of Nakhchiwan: and they reached Julfa before 5.4.1702:

" . . . By the Dominican Fathers two letters have arrived here, one of which was from "the Sovereign Pontiff to the king of Persia,"

the Vicar General of the diocese reported.⁴

The Sovereign Pontiffs (with the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide advising it, subtleness) were indefatigable at every turn in trying by means of polite exhortations and complaints in their Briefs—the only method they could use in such case—to protect from ruin the Catholic inhabitants of the small district of Nakhchiwan, exposed as they were to administrative oppression, to the malice of schismatics and to frontier fighting. From 1670 onwards that part of the East Nakhchiwan was ever a special object of Papal solicitude and predilection: other mission posts were evidently considered better able to fend for themselves. Thus, 1.4.1703, and by the hand of Archbishop Stephen Shiran returning from Rome to his diocese Pope Clement XI again addressed the Shah (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 83A, p. 61):⁵

" . . . We earnestly recommend to Your Highness (Our) venerable brother Stephen, "the Armenian Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, outstanding in uprightness of character and "godly piety, and We ardently desire that You will so fortify him with Your protection "and favour that no one dare to cause him trouble or hindrance from freely being able to "discharge his duty for the salvation of souls, nay rather that You permit him and other "Catholics to restore their former churches of their religion ruined in many places, and "particularly those which are at Kushakan and Shahbuniz; for, since all these are nothing

¹ 2.2.1700, *S.R.*, vol. 538, p. 407.

² 5.4.1702, *S.N.R.*, II, p. 421.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 538, p. 373.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 241. This Brief was dated 20.4.1701 (*Arch. Vat. Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 83, p. 107): Pope Clement XI to Shah Sultan Husain:

" . . . to do Us a favour that You will permit those same Religious to exercise and enjoy at the present time also the "freedom and privileges in which they rejoiced in past times: so that no trouble be caused them, neither as to their persons "nor as to their possessions, and that besides they may retain and possess now at once and peacefully inhabit the house "and dwelling which they held previously in the suburbs of Your royal City of Isfahan. . . ."

⁵ This Brief is mentioned as having been brought by Archbishop Stephen of Nakhchiwan along with a letter from the Republic of Venice, 23.10.1704, to Isfahan, where he stayed some three months—*vide* letter of 31.6.1705 from Fr. Peter Martyr, Superior at Julfa, *S.R.*, vol. 554, p. 290.

"else than certain abodes for devotion and sites and places of retreat for the faithful assiduously praying to God for the times to be prosperous, and for the safety of the princes by whose favour they are established there, they ought not to be deprived of Your royal protection. Besides, it concerns Your grandeur to take care lest the traders, likewise Catholics, whose capital is small as is well known, should be overburdened by fresh taxes by the officials of Your Highness at the time of the latest assessment or numbering since they are known to be nearly unequal to bearing the former burdens. . . ."

At the same time Pope Clement XI took the opportunity (20.4.1701) to reopen the correspondence with the Katholikos Nahapiet, trusting he would receive the five Dominicans kindly, and to express the hope that intercourse would lead to closer relations with Holy Mother Church (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 83, p. 108: for Latin text see appendix).

On Sunday in the octave of Corpus Christi, 1702, the Dominicans had a solemn procession from their church at Julfa, with the Bishop of Baghdad pontificating at Mass and the Armenian priests from the Shariman church present also.¹ Finally, note may be taken here of the several changes among the Dominican prelates of Nakhchiwan in this period.² Archbishop Paul Baptist died in 1701; Stephen Shiran elected 15.1.1702 died in 1708: Hyacinth David, already mentioned, was then elected but set on by robbers and mortally wounded when on his way to Rome for confirmation: Fr. Peter Martyr from Parma was nominated by the Holy See itself, 6.5.1709, and continued till his death in 1721. He had been furnished by Pope Clement XI with a Brief of recommendation dated 15.6.1709 (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 87, p. 64) for himself and "the other Armenian Catholics in Your dominions", and, after arriving in Isfahan on the vigil of SS. Simon and Jude, 1712³ to present it, was received by Shah Sultan Husain, but "with scant convenience, on horseback in the courtyard of his palace as he was returning from a ride"; before March 1712 he had visited all his diocese and calculated his flock to be then 3,000 souls—a huge loss from the flourishing numbers of earlier times: he also reported that the printing of the breviary in Armenian had been very successful, and of great profit for all the Religious in Nakhchiwan.⁴

Returning, then, to Fr. Barnabas Fedeli, thus appointed Vicar Apostolic of the diocese of Isfahan, a letter of his related that from Venice he had reached Smyrna after 35 days' sailing on 24.9.1710:⁵ by 19.1.1711 with his companion Fr. Antoninus from Ferrara he was at Abranar in Nakhchiwan, having had to pay more than 400 piastres to Turkish officials at Erzerum on the way, and he protested against 'Turkish' oppression of the miserable peasants of Nakhchiwan.⁶ On 29.1.1714, already resident in Julfa, he referred to his appointment as Vicar Apostolic: and he acknowledged gratefully the receipt of 200 scudi from the Sacr. Congregation for himself; but in November of that year he mentioned that part of the allowance sent him had been captured at sea by corsairs, while the Dominicans at Abranar had annexed another portion for their needs, so that he had been obliged to draw on the Sacr. Congregation:

"I became a Religious to live in poverty: but I am afraid that I have become a Vicar Apostolic to die in want. . . ."

As a result, in the session of the Sacr. Congregation of 17.12.1715⁸

"the Secretary reported: 'The Father Procurator of the Dominican missionaries in Armenia and Persia sets forth to your Eminences that Fr. Barnabas from Milan, Vicar Apostolic in Isfahan, intimates that he is unable to live in that position on 100 scudi annually.' The Secretary added: 'The pay of 100 scudi is usually given to Vicars Apostolic in those parts: if they are bishops they are given 200 scudi.'"

¹ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 429, 27.7.1702.

² *S.R.*, vol. 594.

³ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 376, Fr. Barnabas, 30.9.1710.

⁷ *S.N.R.*, II, p. 436.

² See *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5, by Fr. L. Lemmens.

⁴ *Idem*, vol. 608, p. 575, 31.8.1716.

⁵ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 378, and *S.R.*, vol. 576, p. 586, 12.2.1711.

⁸ *Acta* for 1715, p. 657.



BISHOP BARNABAS FEDELI, OP.

Fourth Bishop of Isfahan (from a painting in the possession of the
Dominican Order, Rome)

In order to provide the regulation higher pay, the Congregation took the course of giving promotion to the higher grade, and their decree was:

“That the Holy Father should be prayed to delegate the applicant as bishop with the “usual provision of 200 scudi. On the 17th January” (1716) “His Holiness gave instructions for the matter to be put back for further examination as to whether the applicant “was fit to be placed to govern the diocese of Isfahan, and for persons suitable for the see “to be sought. . . .”

In the General Session of 14.1.1716

“the matter having been once more brought forward, it was decided His Holiness should “be once again begged to promote Fr. Barnabas from Milan to be Bishop of Isfahan. “On the 15th His Holiness gave his consent, and the Bull was issued, 8.6.1716.”¹

Evidently Fr. Barnabas had endeavoured to decline and escape from the burden, for the Prior of S. Sabina in Rome referred in a communication² to:

“the latest decisions taken by the Sacr. Congregation, by which the reasons brought forward “by Fr. Barnabas Fedeli for declining the bishopric of Isfahan are rejected. . . . Your “Eminences were pleased to express their intention to supply him with the sacred vestments “although no decree was passed on the subject. . . .”³

This was precisely the year when the Carmelites had been reduced by death and non-dispatch of new recruits to two Fathers for the whole extent of their mission—one of them at Basra, the other was French. Such were the circumstances, in which the only Dominican became bishop of a see which otherwise was solely filled by Carmelites in a period of some 160 years.

The Bulls reached Isfahan, 29.1.1719,⁴ and on 16.4.1719 Fr. Barnabas wrote that he was setting out that day for Tabriz:⁵ he was consecrated at Abranar, 9.7.1719⁶ by his fellow Dominican, Peter Martyr from Parma.

In a unique position for watching and recording and reporting to Rome events in Persia during a period packed with incidents and change, Bishop Barnabas Fedeli is most disappointing to any annalist: it will be read in due course how for years he ceased to have any correspondence with Rome (not even to keep a diary to dispatch when safe opportunity offered): and with few exceptions the considerable number of communications of his in the archives deal with disputes and points of ecclesiastical discipline.

At the beginning of his work as a bishop he was directed to perform a painful duty in regard to a brother bishop, and a Frenchman at that. The diocese of Baghdad may be unique for the chequered sequence of appointments made to it of bishops and coadjutors in the first hundred years of its creation: as the author of *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, the late Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M., remarked:

“Nowhere in the East does the series of Latin bishops show such intervals as in Persia “and in Mesopotamia. In the latter, in two centuries there are only to be found three “bishops who stayed in their diocese. . . .”

The first bishop nominated to Baghdad, Fr. Timothy Perez, by right of succession became Bishop of Isfahan before even he had time to sail for the East: the second, Fr. Bernard spent

¹ Quoted from *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10.

² *S.N.R.*, III, p. 508.

³ The vestments had in fact been ordered since 16.5.1718, and were all ready made, but not handed over, as no agent to take them had appeared.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 474.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 479.

⁶ *S.R.*, vol. 653, letter of 5.9.1725.

only 1½ years, not in Mesopotamia but in Persia, and then passed over 25 years of the rest of his life in France: the third, Dom. P. du Chemin, had himself consecrated but then refused to proceed to the East and remained in France for nearly another quarter of a century when, on his death, the fourth in succession, Mgr Picquet, became Bishop of Baghdad. But within little more than two years he too was dead without having resided in Mesopotamia. The fifth bishop, Mgr Pidou, likewise did not reside within his diocese, though his episcopal life lasted over 20 years: of his two coadjutors with right of succession one had died immediately after arrival in Persia, the other declined to proceed to the East and resigned. Before the death of Mgr Pidou was known in Rome action was taken to find him yet a third coadjutor and, in the General Session of the Sacr. Congregation, 26.4.1718,¹

“The Secretary reports with regard to the election of a coadjutor for the Bishop of ‘Baghdad: ‘There is proposed for such a post by the Agent for the French bishops and ‘missionaries of the Seminary at Paris the priest Dominic Mary Varlet, whom he asserts ‘to be a good, pious and learned man, conversant with oriental languages and at present ‘an apostolic missionary in America, sufficiently well provided with money and aged ‘about forty.’”

The orders were issued:

“Let a letter be written to the Nuncio for information to be obtained about the qualifications of Dominic M. Varlet, in particular about his tenets and attainments: and for ‘the Secretary to get into touch with Cardinals de la Trémoille and Gualterio, and write ‘to them for information.”

Then, in the session of 15.11.1717 (?), the Secretary produced a

“certificate in original from the superior of the mission and from the seminary of the ‘Archbishop of Bordeaux bearing witness that the petitioner is aged about 40, is now ‘staying in the missions in America in the position of Vicar General for the Bishop of ‘Quebec and is deserving praise for his charity and fear of God. . . .

“From Mgr the Nuncio so far no news has been received. . . .”

“The order was issued: ‘Let him be made coadjutor to (the Bishop of) Baghdad, if it ‘should be the pleasure of His Holiness.’ On audience had of His Holiness, 29.8.1718, ‘His Holiness gave his consent. . . .”

Only in 1719 did the Sacr. Congregation learn from Isfahan that Bishop Pidou de St. Olon had died 20.11.1717: so, *ipso facto*, the newly consecrated Bishop of Ascalon succeeded as Bishop of Baghdad. The Sacr. Congregation had been grossly misled as to the person recommended, who was a Jansenist. When eventually news came from the Nuncio at Paris² it was to the effect that he did not know Varlet: the latter had not called on him, although instructed to do so before proceeding to his post in the East. The Nuncio further wrote (p. 140) of the Seminary for Foreign Missions being then “a real seminary of Jansenists”. When the Secretary of State made further enquiries, he learnt from the Procurator for the Seminary for Foreign Missions that not only had Fr. Varlet left Paris, 18.3.1719, but that he had had himself consecrated too. Under pain of suspension, therefore, Mgr Varlet was informed by letter that he must take an oath before Mgr Barnabas Fedeli, Bishop of Isfahan, and write a letter of submission to the Nuncio in Paris. It was next heard that he was in Holland and had ordained Jansenist priests and publicly administered confirmation in a Jansenist oratory. A special session of the Congregation, 25.5.1719, wished it to be communicated to the Nuncio and others that

¹ Quoted from Fr. L. Lemmens’ O.F.M.’s *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10.

² *S.N.R.*, III, p. 116, 13.3.1719.

“by orders of the Pope they should have arrested Mgr Varlet, appointed Bishop of Baghdad, giving instructions to do so in all places by which it is thought he might travel so that he cannot continue his journey, and the same special Congregation suspended Bishop Varlet from the exercise of his Order as a bishop and jurisdiction, and wrote to the Bishop of Isfahan to put into execution this order.”¹

In consequence there was received in Rome in due course a letter from Bishop Barnabas Fedeli, dated 25.5.1720:²

“In the matter of the Bishop of Baghdad I have arranged to execute the instructions of the Sacr. Congregation, as I have already written in more detail to your Eminences from ‘here’ (Isfahan) ‘and from Qazwin. Now I am waiting from day to day for his arrival in Qazwin, and some reply from him to the many letters I and the missionaries have written him. . . . After I had written thus far a letter from Fr. Bachouard, the Jesuit missionary at Shamakha has reached me: and he informs me that, when he had notified the censure to the Bishop of Baghdad, the latter had decided to turn back and was only awaiting the opportunity of some ship to cross the Caspian Sea; but he was leaving (there) at Shamakha one of his missionary priests called Abbé Rébusat, who wants to come on to Isfahan, to do I know not what. . . .”

A Capuchin from Moscow reported, 7.1.1721, to the Sacr. Congregation that Mgr Varlet was already in S. Petersburg: the Nuncio at Brussels, 29.5.1722, that he was at Amsterdam.³

Out of this event there arose a small problem which was to occupy the Carmelites for another quarter of a century—the administration of the episcopal buildings and church at Hamadan possessed by the Bishop of Baghdad as representing the Sacr. Congregation. On 13.2.1720 Fr. Faustin, Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites, wrote from Isfahan to the Definitory General of the Order:⁴

“Tomorrow I leave for Hamadan to take possession of the episcopal residence of the Bishop of Baghdad, who has been suspended, and to oppose him in case . . .”—“Our Vicar Provincial, who on the orders of the Sacr. Congregation has left to recover the mission at Hamadan . . .”

as wrote another Carmelite Religious left alone in the convent.⁵

Fr. Faustin himself in another long account of 26.5.1721, after stating that the Bishop of Isfahan had designated him as his representative for the diocese of Baghdad, and that he had been to take possession of the episcopal residence at Hamadan

“as the late Mgr Pidou, Bishop of Baghdad, had recommended to me in his last will”,

went on to describe how after his arrival in Hamadan, 8.3.1720, he had found that:

“the greater part of the Armenians had fled, some here and some there because of the gross ill-treatment constantly inflicted on them by the Khan, only a few and one priest (out of seven there were previously) have remained. . . . The Residence there is partly ruined, partly in a ruinous condition, and it has been necessary to repair it before it collapses entirely with the advent of the rains and snow, which in that region falls in abundance. I have done this with all possible economy, and spent 19 Tumans . . . and three rooms still remain to be repaired. I have spent another 13 Tumans partly in buying

¹ Quoted from *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, by Fr. Lemmens, O.F.M., No. 5.

² *S.R.*, vol. 634, p. 385.

³ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 208, and p. 199. To some extent at least it is from the ‘ordinations’ by Mgr Varlet that the community who call themselves ‘Old Catholics’ claim to derive valid Orders today.

⁴ O.C.D. 238 g.

⁵ Fr. Alexander of S. Sigismund, 28.6.1720. O.C.D. 238 g.

"the furniture necessary, partly on our travelling expenses, partly for our maintenance . . . in all this comes to 32 Tumans, i.e. 640 piastres; but I have left there a provision of wine, rice and butter to last up to October of this year. Of these 32 Tumans I took 15 on interest from the Indian 'sarrafs' of the Dutch merchants for one year . . . and I pay for each Tuman 1 shahi monthly by the kindness of these gentlemen, whereas usually here 1 'abbasi' (i.e. 4 shahis) "=24 per cent is charged. The rest has been lent me by the English merchants" (i.e. of the East India Company): "with them at present I have a debt amounting to 14 Tumans. . . . In Hamadan there is only Fr. John Joseph, a Religious of much virtue, well informed about that mission. . . ."

Thus began the small Carmelite settlement at Hamadan on behalf of the Sacr. Congregation and the Vicars Apostolic of Baghdad—it was never a mission, or Residence proper.

To provide for the emergency that had thus arisen in the diocese of Baghdad in the general session of the Sacr. Congregation, 27.5.1721, the Secretary related:¹

"Since, before the case of Varlet be judged or a successor be appointed, necessarily some time will pass, and considering too that the Fathers in question" (i.e. the Carmelites in Persia) "will not be able adequately to provide for the needs of the diocese in question" (Baghdad) "at least without prejudice to their own mission and Residences of their Order, for which they are assigned, if it should so appear to your Eminences' judgment, there could be appointed for the time being in charge of it a Vicar Apostolic to be maintained out of the special revenues of the see, which amount to the sum of scudi 519.77. For the post in question there would be very suitable Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, a Discalced Carmelite of French nationality formerly a missionary in Persia, an indefatigable Religious and deserving well of our holy Faith. He is now travelling in Syria, where he has proceeded for the establishment² of some hospices of their own Order in those parts. . . ."

and

"in an audience given on the 30th of that month, May 1721, His Holiness assented. The Brief was issued on 14.6.1721."³

The Bulls of appointment reached him 28.12.1721 in Malta, whence he proposed to start at once.⁴

This Carmelite Religious, who had been Vicar Provincial of the Persian Mission from 1709 to 1713 and had left it only in 1715, till his resignation and replacement in 1729 remained for all but a few months in the diocese of Baghdad, the first of its prelates to do so. By his letters he left Aleppo, 18.3.1722, reached on 17.4.1722 Mausil (where he estimated the Christians of the town and vicinity at 50,000, mostly Nestorians and Jacobites, and using five ancient churches: it was fifteen years since the Capuchins had been expelled); and leaving Baghdad about 25.9.1722, after a stay of some four months, he took up his quarters in Basra by 6.10.1722.⁵

The second matter of ecclesiastical discipline, which troubled the new Bishop of Isfahan, was the conflict into which he early came with the French consul at Isfahan (the name is not mentioned: whether M. de Gardanne or his successor), and the following recital affords more evidence of French assertiveness at Isfahan in this reign:⁶

"In the month of June last I informed your Eminence of some altercation that had arisen between myself and Monsieur the consul for France, who with an assumption of superiority which does not befit his position as consul wants to give me lessons in the

¹ *Acta of 1721*, p. 159, quoted by Fr. L. Lemmens in *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*.

² *S.N.R.*, III, p. 169; he had been repairing Mt. Carmel, and wanted to propose missions at Damascus and Beirut.

³ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 175.

⁴ *Idem*, IV, p. 21.

⁵ *Vide* letters of Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, 23.4.1722, 12.5.1722, 20.5.1722, 6.10.1722 in *S.N.R.*, III, p. 189, 195, 197, 203 respectively.

⁶ Bishop Barnabas, 25.5.1720, *S.R.*, vol. 634, *post* p. 335.

"manner how to pray in the church of the Jesuit Fathers, which he has declared to be the 'French' church. Thereupon I was myself obliged to answer him with the same emphasis "with which he had spoken, that his position was that of consul, head of a company of "merchants, not forsooth that of ambassador: and, as the church in question had never "been declared to be such, no more was he in a position to declare it to be, the more "especially since *that mission from the start*, forty or sixty years previously, *had been founded by "a Polish ambassador* in the name of his Majesty" (i.e. the king of Poland)—"besides which "the church is the most majestic" (i.e. in Julfa). . . . "The reason for his annoyance was "because on S. Joseph's day." (i.e. March 19th) "I was pontificating in the church of these "Jesuit Fathers and at the end of the Mass I was to give Benediction with the most holy "Sacrament which was exposed after the Communion. As the cantors prepared to intone "the verse for their king 'Salve fac regem' " (God save the king, i.e. Louis XV) "without "having first intoned the verse for the Sovereign Pontiff, I had them well warned to say " 'salvos fac servos Tuos', etc., my intention being to include both the Sovereign Pontiff "and the king of France, seeing that the suddenness of the incident, the presence of the "most holy Sacrament and the expectancy of the people did not allow me to compel the "cantors to intone the verse for the Sovereign Pontiff which in the past they had never "been accustomed to intone. . . . Monsieur the consul complained without reason that "I had forbidden prayer to be offered for his king. . . . On the feast of S. Louis Monsieur "the consul wished to have Mass sung at his house. I went to return his visit, and since "then we have met twice or thrice in some neutral place, and always with the former "compliments and friendliness. . . . I have written another letter to the Fr. Superior of "the Jesuits, whom I have forbidden,¹ both himself and his missionaries, to sing Mass or "be present at a sung Mass in the houses of laymen and I issued this prohibition under "pain of suspension. So the Mass was not sung by the Jesuit Fathers, but it is true that "Monsieur the consul had it sung by three or four of his secular priests. This is the true "account without any exaggeration. For your further information I must point out that "Monsieur the consul has appointed the church of the Jesuit Fathers the 'French church', "their house as the 'French Residency'. Besides this there are five other churches, two "here in Julfa, and three in the city. The Christian and Catholic population is here in "Julfa. The entire French community except for two or three in his household is limited "to a Catholic doctor and a clockmaker from Geneva, apart from three French Catholics "living in the houses of the English. Yet they and the French missionaries want to make "this consul appear as it were an ambassador."

Bishop Fedeli was also greatly preoccupied in 1720-2 by negotiations he had been directed from Rome to press with the Persian Court for redress to the Capuchin missions in Tiflis and Ganjeh, destroyed by the schismatic Armenians on incitement from their Katholikos, and in connection with which the Emperor and Louis XV of France, as well as the Pope, had written protests to Shah Sultan Husain.

One after another three Briefs had been issued by Pope Clement XI in 1719 and 1720. The first was a vigorous protest and demand for punishment of the Katholikos of the Armenians

¹ In a letter of 1713 as Vicar Apostolic Mgr Fedeli had complained that the Jesuits would not allow him to make a visitation of their House at Julfa (*S.R.*, vol. 597, p. 506), and as Bishop he was complaining of the Jesuit superior, 24.5.1721 (*S.R.*, vol. 634). The General of the Jesuits in Rome, 10.12.1722 (*S.N.R.*, III, p. 513), acknowledging to the Sac. Congregation the remonstrance made, stated that he had given directions to the Fathers of the Society at Isfahan as to their duties of obedience towards the Bishop. Mgr Fedeli made much use of the Polish Jesuit Fr. Krusinski, the author of the *Memoirs of the Revolution in Persia*; but there is evidence from several sides that they were causing discord at Julfa at this period, the French Fathers presumably. A Dominican, 2.9.1706 (*S.N.R.*, II, p. 490) referred to a memorial presented by the Jesuits of Julfa asking for their church to be declared the 'parish' church to the exclusion of all others, answered in the negative by the Sac. Congregation. The Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites in his letter of 1719 (O.C.D. 242 b) wrote:

"In Julfa there are the Jesuit Fathers, the Dominicans and ourselves—the first are disturbing with their intrigues. . . ." The Augustinian superior, 24.9.1720 (*S.R.*, vol. 634, p. 389) wrote to the Card. Prefect:

"It is true the Jesuit Fathers had been upset, but it is the fault of some of the Jesuits themselves who by their temperament will not remain quiet. . . ."

and others for damage to the Capuchin mission in Tiflis done at his instigation, and for compensation: it was dated 3.1.1719 (Arch. Vat., *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 94, p. 24):

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. The anxiety of mind and vexation caused Us, when by letters from those parts We lately heard of the wrongs, the insults and very serious losses which the Catholic Armenians at Tiflis in the province of Georgia and the missionary Religious of the Order of the Friars Minor of S. Francis called Capuchins, assisting them in their spiritual needs, who are living there by the permission of Your Highness, not so very long ago were compelled to suffer, goes beyond all verbal explanation.

"For, as We have understood, they have been very badly used, beaten with rods, given deadly wounds, spoiled of their goods and afflicted with every other kind of injury.

"Besides this, the House of the missionaries was pillaged and in barbarian fashion together with some part of the church utterly demolished and levelled with the ground.

"Now all these acts, as We have likewise learned, happened chiefly at the dastardly instigation and by the craft of the schismatic Patriarch of Armenia at Echmiadzin and of a certain Vartapet Minas, implacable enemies of the orthodox religion, who made a conspiracy to ruin the same Armenian Catholics and the missionaries with such bitterness of spirit that not even the chief man of the place (although, aroused by the enormity of the crime, he did not omit to oppose them as far as he was allowed) was able to restrain the fury of their attack.

"Therefore with the obligation of Our pastoral office urging Us, We earnestly beg and beseech Your Highness to order that as many as were responsible for this dreadful persecution or took part in it, but especially the above-mentioned Patriarch and Vartapet be all coerced by some signal punishment, and over and above that You will cause all losses, which both the missionaries and the other Catholics above-mentioned have so undeservedly suffered, to be made good by them as quickly as may be.

"But what We first and foremost earnestly ask of You is that You will order the House and church of the missionaries to be rebuilt forthwith. For, since these are naught but abodes for pious devotions, and habitations and sanctuary for the Faithful who are continually praying to God, the Greatest and Best, for the temporal happiness and safety of the princes by whose benefaction they were established, they ought in no wise to be bereft of Your royal patronage.

"Further We urgently solicit of You that You will deem all missionaries and Catholics living in Your dominions especially entrusted to Your protection, and so support with Your aid and protection their affairs that henceforth they cannot any further be persecuted and molested by the schismatics, but will get that tranquillity and the free exercise of the Catholic religion, which up till now they possessed by the kindly permission of Yourself, the king, and of Your ancestors.

"Finally We demand of Your Highness with the greatest intentness of mind of which We are able that You will be pleased to ratify all the privileges, which Your distinguished forefathers of their clemency conceded to the aforesaid Catholics and missionaries, and especially that You will exempt and absolutely free them from the very serious oppression they now suffer from Your tax-collectors on account of certain unusual taxes beyond their capacity, and that You will give orders that merely that tribute be exacted from them which in past times they had been accustomed to pay according to their power.

"This will not be so supremely worthy of Your fairness and magnanimity as it will be by far the most gratifying to Us who in turn, when occasion is offered of complying with Your wishes, will not omit openly to display Our mutual goodwill, well disposed towards You, and meanwhile We earnestly pray the Father of mercies and Author of all good things to preserve Your Highness safe and sound for long, flourishing in all happiness

“and, what is the chief thing, to vouchsafe to lead You by His heavenly light into the way
“of the true, eternal salvation.

“Given at Rome, the third of January 1719.”

In the following month the Pope wrote again to obtain redress for the Capuchins in Georgia, and to emphasize importance of the matter by pointing to the interest the Emperor and other sovereigns were taking. Dated 18.2.1719 (*Arch. Vat. Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 94, p. 81), t began:

“Illustrious and most puissant king of the Persians, greeting and the light of Divine
“grace. Being beyond measure anxious that the letter which We wrote to You in the
“similar form of a Brief on the 3rd of the month of January last past should be brought to
“You safely, We took the course of forwarding it to Our venerable brother Barnabas,
“Bishop of Isfahan, by whom it will be delivered to You.

“With this same purpose in view We also send to that prelate three other letters, the
“first of which Our very dear son in Christ, Charles the Emperor-elect of the Romans,
“the second Our well-beloved sons the Doge and Republic of Venice, and the third Our
“likewise well-beloved son, the noble Cosimo Grand Duke of Etruria, have considered
“should be written to You, their piety urging them.

“From all the above-mentioned letters You will abundantly perceive how greatly not
“only We but also the exalted princes of the Christian commonwealth have it at heart
“that the very serious harm recently wreaked on the Catholic Armenians and the missionary
“Religious of the Order of Friars Minor of S. Francis called Capuchins at Tiflis in the
“province of Georgia shall be made good, its authors namely the schismatic Armenian
“patriarch at Echmiadzin and a certain Minas, a Vartapet, suitably punished, and finally
“the Armenian Catholics and missionaries so rejoice in the protection of Your benignity
“that for the rest they cannot be injured by any violence from anyone and, as is just, get
“freedom and tranquillity. . . . We ask You insistently to be so good as to lend favourable
“and kindly ears to the aforesaid Bishop Barnabas when he treats about these matters,
“while We shall not cease with earnest desires to beseech the Divine goodness that It will
“long preserve Your Highness unharmed and flourishing with every happiness. Given at
“Rome, the 18th February 1719.”

Evidently Shah Sultan Husain or his Wazirs did issue some orders to bring the patriarch presumably Astvadzatur of Hamadan, 1715-29) to book, but bribery and corruption, those courges of the East in particular, saved him from making the amends due; for, 22.3.1720, *Arch. Vat., Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 94, p. 510) Pope Clement XI was once more pressing the Shah on the point, so as to secure better conditions for the Uniats:

“Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. By the latest
“letters brought here from the province of Georgia We are notified that the schismatic
“Armenian patriarch of Echmiadzin, of whom We have at other times strongly complained
“to Your Highness, since he was the principal author of that violent persecution, which
“grievously afflicted the Catholics living in the town of Tiflis, and indeed brought the
“utmost ruin to the Apostolic missionaries and to the whole mission established there from
“olden times, after he had by Your Highness’s command been compelled to submit to
“judgment by the governor of Erivan, having bribed the governor himself and the other
“senior officials with money, escaped the punishment which he was deservedly dreading
“owing to consciousness of his wicked action. From this it has come about that the
“adherents of the patriarch, puffed up with pride, do not hesitate openly and most impu-
“dently to threaten the orthodox religion with final destruction. How greatly not only We
“but also the exalted princes of the Christian commonwealth have been aroused by the
“enormity of this action, and how earnestly they seek of and adjure Your well-known fair-
“mindedness that You check the temerity of the aforesaid patriarch and his supporters by

"some signal punishment, and that You deign to save from wrongs and kindly support
 "with Your royal protection the said Catholics and missionaries, You will comprehend
 "from the letters of those princes, which will be brought to You along with this. To such
 "demands We the more willingly add Our own present good offices with Your Highness
 "in that We, as part of Our pastoral duty and of the charge committed Us to care for all
 "the churches, are the more closely bound by checking the impudence of the schismatics
 "to take careful pains that everyone professing or preaching the Catholic religion in Your
 "dominions may continue to enjoy that freedom from anxiety and the quiet which Your
 "ancestors and You too have hitherto very kindly granted them. . . . Given at Rome,
 "the 22nd day of March 1720. . . ."

The Court was at the time away from Isfahan—at Tihran it would seem: and the Bishop found it more useful to avail himself of Fr. Judas Thaddeus Krusinski, then nearly fifteen years in the country, than to make the journey himself. It was while this matter was being pursued that the Bishop had to convey to the Sac. Congregation, 12.1.1721,¹ not the progress of his representations, but news of one of the tragedies of Persian history, which in this case accelerated the fall of the Safawi dynasty.

"On the 11th December last" (i.e. 1720) "there returned from the Court a Jesuit missionary Father, a Pole, who had gone thither at my instance. But the same evening
 "there arrived one after the other express couriers with the news that 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh
 "had been deposed and disgraced because of his faithless and treacherous conduct towards
 "the king, since it had become known from certain letters, as was commonly stated, that
 "he was conspiring against the king himself—wherefore the king ordered that he should
 "be at once beheaded, but one of his loyal and sagacious officials suggested that it would
 "be better to hold him prisoner for some time, well guarded, in order to discover the more
 "accurately his treasures and his great riches, which up till now amount to more than
 "20 million Roman scudi amassed in the five or six years that he has been in office. For
 "the present they have gouged out his eyes with a dagger² and then presented them to the
 "Shah on a golden tray. One nephew of his, who was commander of the troops, has
 "been arrested and bound, to be taken before the king—he too had got together very great

¹ S.R., vol. 634.

² The recension in English by Fr. du Cerceau of Fr. Krusinski's *Memoirs* relates the events leading up to this event to have been as follows. Fath 'Ali Khan, 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, was a Lesghian by race, from the Daghistan country: he had been instrumental in having his brother-in-law (or nephew, as Bishop Fedeli calls him?), Lutf 'Ali Khan, appointed commander of the forces sent to reoccupy Kandahar. Enemies jealous of the latter's military success had spoilt and upset an arrangement he had made with the Portuguese for an expedition against Masqat. In revenge Lutf 'Ali Khan proceeded to refit and quarter his troops on the villages and property in the hinterland of the Persian shore belonging to those enemies at Court, taking away horses and supplies and levying large contributions. With a vast provision loaded on camels in November 1720 he moved up to Shiraz, intending to march towards Kandahar. But in their turn his enemies, incensed at his treatment of their properties, made common cause with the opposition faction at Court and determined to ruin Lutf 'Ali Khan by encompassing the downfall of his relative, the chief Wazir, for many years the Shah's *alter ego*. Two intimate attendants of Shah Sultan Husain, his Mulla or 'chaplain' and his Hakim-bashi, or physician-in-chief, in the middle of the night, therefore, broke all the rules by entering the bedchamber of the monarch and waking him: throwing down their turbans on to the ground, always a sign of crisis with orientals, they poured out to the frightened Shah a tale of a plot that had been detected—that his chief minister, 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, had planned to murder him and the royal family that night. They even produced a paper which seemed to bear the seal of the chief Wazir: according to this the latter had sent for 3,000 Kurds to make his *coup*. Without reflection or any further enquiry, Shah Sultan Husain, summoning some of his eunuchs, took counsel with them and then ordered the chief of the guards, the Qurchi-bashi to break into the house of Fath 'Ali Khan and cut off his head. The Minister, quiet in his house and unaware of all this, offered no resistance: he was not decapitated but at the Qurchi-bashi's house his eyes were removed from their sockets, and he was tortured to give information as to his fortune and valuables, estimated in Krusinski's *Memoirs* at 900,000 Tumans. Meanwhile couriers from the Shah had been sent off to Shiraz to trap Lutf 'Ali Khan, the successful general, and brother-in-law, or nephew of the blinded Wazir: and he was brought to Isfahan and kept in confinement but, the Shah having by then been convinced of the innocence of 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, no worse measure was taken against him. His army encamped round Shiraz no sooner had learnt of one of the grounds for their general's removal being the booty they had carried off from the Gulf littoral than they melted away with it. This typical Court drama with its fateful results took place at the end of November 1720, while the Shah was at Tihran—"a little village, but well fortified with walls and very strong from its situation." Its immediate result in the spring of 1721 was that the Daghistanis, fellow-countrymen of the blinded Fath 'Ali Khan, rose in force, plundered several towns including Shamakha and ravaged the province of Shirwan. This disorder was followed in the summer of 1721 by the great earthquake which laid Tabriz in ruins.

"riches. . . . This change, then, and regard to the fact that the whole Court was in perturbation and greatly preoccupied over the affairs of the whole country, chiefly in changing the governors and other officials who were either relatives or partisans of 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, have kept me back from going to Court, and on the advice of some missionaries well acquainted with our business . . . it has been thought well to send once more to the Court and present a new petition to the new 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, as the Jesuit Father in question has already done. . . . The Father, therefore, from Tihiran, where the king is, has written to me that he has already presented the petition to the 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh . . . the greatest difficulty is to find money again."

Mgr Fedeli ended this letter by alluding to the Shah's health as not being yet completely restored.

Perhaps Bishop Fedeli, O.P., had himself been to the Court, for he wrote again, 24.5.1721:¹

"Five months ago I handed to the Polish Jesuit Father, whose name is Thaddeus Krusinski, the replies of the Shah, which I received in *Qazwin*;² but, as this Father has been twice to the Court, in accordance with what I wrote your Eminence, to ask for the issue of those other letters, he lost much time in going and returning. . . ."

Then some time in May or June 1721, after having made in dudgeon or displeasure or apprehension a protracted stay away from Isfahan, Shah Sultan Husain returned to the capital: and Bishop Barnabas gives a description³ of the reception at the palace when he presented other letters which had arrived from Europe—how pompous in comparison with the entertainments Shah 'Abbas I gave to Europeans will be appreciated by readers:

"At last—after so many hazards—I have presented the two letters, which were received by the king with similar compliments to the first. After the Shah had returned (to Isfahan)—welcomed with exceeding great applause and extraordinary demonstrations of rejoicing by all the nation—he gave a sumptuous banquet to all the notables, and I was summoned on that occasion to present the letters, which I did according to the ceremonial already explained on other occasions. After I had presented the letters two stools⁴ in European style were brought, one for myself, the other for my companion, for us to sit: for the other guests were sitting on the ground on carpets in accordance with the custom of the country. My stool was placed as it were opposite the king, but at a distance of twelve or fourteen paces, for between the Shah and myself there was a beautiful fountain. The stool of my companion was placed eight or ten paces behind me (and at a different elevation from that where were all the principal fellow-guests), being three or four steps lower.

"The place, where the king held his reception is not a room or covered hall, but a very large open porch, handsomer and more majestic than that of S. Peter's, though not so big. It is completely full of large and small mirrors, marvellously interlaced, and some pictures with fine frames. There are in it 24 columns, the shafts of which must be of wood, but externally are altogether covered with small pieces of looking-glass like the whole porch, which is full of very rich couches, some of them of gold. In the middle of the porch, inside, as it might be the great door of S. Peter's, there is a large niche where is the king, sitting on a great cushion of brocade with another behind his shoulders.

¹ S.R., vol. 634, p. 335.

² It was presumably to these replies from the Shah, to which Fr. Faustin referred in a letter from Isfahan, 26.5.1721:

"The Bishop has been urging me to write and take advantage of this opportunity of his sending to His Holiness and to the Venetian Republic the replies from the king of Persia which have been lying in his hands for more than a year.

"The Carmelite Lay Brother Valentine, who carried them, died of heat in the deserts of Arabia, but the letters were recovered and reached Rome safely." ³ S.R., vol. 634, p. 365.

⁴ The use of seats and chairs was evidently a novelty in Persia about 1720: the diary of the East India Company's Agents at Gāmburūn, dated 15.12.1728, mentions: "this morning we paid a visit to 'Abdullah Khan" (i.e. the Afghan representative) "who gave us chairs after the *Spahan* fashion". Even in James Morier's *Journey through Persia*, 1812, there is an illustration showing the English mission of Sir Harford Jones (in cocked hats, tight clothes, etc.) sitting cross-legged on the floor along the wall of the audience hall of the prince governor-general of Fars.

"When, therefore, we had sat down on our stools they brought me a great tray of comfits and other sweetmeats. A little later they brought water spiced with cinnamon and sugar to the Shah, who after drinking a small coffee-cup sent one to me. At a further interval of a quarter of an hour later they began to spread the cloths for the dinner and one of brocade, as were the rest, was spread in front of me. They carried the foodstuffs first to the king: there were 15 to 20 valets, each with a royal dish, some of the dishes being of gold, others of majolica from China or, as we should say, porcelain; but all the dish-covers were of gold. The first dish was so large that it might rather be termed a great pot of gold, very heavy with its companion lid, and was borne by two valets, because one alone could not carry it. To each of the guests, as to myself, they brought seven royal dishes, four of gold and three of majolica, but all with a great golden lid and brim full of many kinds of food. The king began to eat, and all the rest were eating, so that I was obliged to do likewise. The meal lasted about half an hour, but was so well ordered, and with such ceremony and absence of noise that it seemed like in a refectory full of monks. When the meal was at an end, the cloths were taken away and they brought round gold and silver jugs and basins for us to wash our hands: after this all rose and each went his way, as also did I, having first bowed to the Shah. The next morning I sent a greeting to the king's interpreter, and begged him to translate faithfully and correctly the letters, promising that I would show myself grateful for his labours. . . ."

The name of the new chief minister of state is not given in the Bishop's letters, nor in Fr. du Cerceau's work, but the former, 6.12.1721, considered:¹

". . . for the rest, the Shah is very courteous and inclined to favour Europeans in particular, 'the chief Minister, 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, is disinterested and very affable. . . ."

Owing to the instructions received from Rome with regard to the Briefs and letters from European princes being delivered in connection with oppression in the northern provinces, a considerable outlay of money became necessary:

"I am bound, however, to spend much money in order to obtain anything from the subordinate officials, e.g. secretaries and interpreters. . . . Your Eminences must not be astonished that already almost 500 scudi have been spent in 16 months' work";

and there is on record² an interesting bill of charges in connection with the two journeys of Fr. Judas Thaddeus Krusinski—so he signed his name to it—and the presentation of letters by the Bishop in Isfahan:

"The expenses incurred in dispatching the letters, sent by the Sovereign Pontiff to Fr. Barnabas, Bishop of Isfahan, to be presented to the Persian monarch"; and there were three letters: "(a Brief from the Sovereign Pontiff himself, a letter from the Emperor and another from the king of France),"

dated 9.6.1721. It is lengthy, so only points will be noticed:

	scudi
"For his journey with one servant to Tihran . . .	21.0
"To the Consul's servants, who accompanied me on horseback	2.50
"For the brocade to wrap round the letter	2.80
"For the Shah's interpreter (two payments)	45.00
"To the Secretary, Mamidek [? <i>sic</i> , for Muhammad Baig] three payments	
" in all	367.50
"To the Mihmandar himself	22.50"

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 525.

² *Idem*, p. 531.

That had been spent between June and December 1721. Then, relates the Bishop's letter of 10.1.1722:¹

"Precisely on the day of the Three Kings" (i.e. the Epiphany—6th January) "my door "was knocked, with a summons to the Shah to fetch the replies to the three greatest potentates in Europe, although I was prevented from having that for the king of France: it is "true that the Shah himself made me almost an apology, saying to me—after having "caused 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh to hand over to me two letters, one for the Sovereign Pontiff, "the other for the Emperor—"I do not give you that for the king of France because I want "to send someone there for other business, and it will be that person who will take it": "and he then asked his interpreter what answer I gave to that: and I replied that all his "Majesty did was well done. The king appeared satisfied, and I went off contentedly. . . ."²

(In another letter—written 14.1.1722³—the Bishop remarked:

"Although the Shah has honoured me with a rich robe, i.e. a whole dress in Persian "style, with which I went to receive the replies, all the same he made me no other present "towards the expenses, as he had done on the previous occasion: and that was because I "did not come from abroad or elsewhere, and because I have my dwelling here: so they "have not given me a house nor indemnified me for expenses, although I incurred more "than on the previous occasion. . . ."

From the list, part of which has been given above, can be even learnt what it cost the Bishop to receive his *khal'at*, and go to Court that Epiphany morning. For example:

		scudi
"January 6th (1722)	To 3 servants of the Mihmandar	6.30
	To the Mirab	1.50
	To 4 servants accompanying me to receive the replies	2.10
	To the Secretary, Mamadak	45.00
	To the vice-Mihmandar	22.50
„ 12th	To the men who brought the <i>khal'at</i>	15.00
„ 16th	To the Mulla for copying the <i>raqams</i>	0.30
„ 22nd	For the certifying to copies of the <i>raqams</i>	3.82")

To continue the letter of 10.1.1722 about the Shah handing him the replies for Rome and the Emperor:

" . . . For months past we had been labouring, spending money and giving presents "and, although we had obtained as much as wanted and requested in our petitions, they" (the Persians) "did not get to the end of the business by replying to the letters: and this "weighed heavily on me. Whenever some festival of the country drew near, we went in "hopes of having the letters taken in hand—then on the eve, or two days before the festival, "we would be given an excuse or pretext. Besides, the festivals on which the Shah is wont "either to receive letters or to give replies are not frequent: so that, when I heard that "on the 17th of the current moon according to the computation of these Persians—the "Epiphany, to be precise—there was to be a big festival, I arranged to have application "made for our business: and here now at last the position was favourable: all the officials "said unanimously that we should have our business dispatched: on the day before the "eve of the festival public rumour had it that I should be summoned. So we were very

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 518.

² Bishop Barnabas mentions here that the French had been trying to get the reply for their king, and even offered money for it in competition with him.

³ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 520.

"pleased, but none the less on the eve I sent to make sure of it and to make sure of the officials; but one, the chief and secretary of the king, began to hesitate and find excuses, saying that it was necessary to present a memorial to 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh. At night my interpreter returned with such a reply, and your Eminence can imagine how taken aback I was at such unexpected news. All the same I did not lose courage and, after commending myself to the Holy Kings, early the next morning I sent the interpreter to the official in question and to another, whom I knew to be greedy for money, an intimation that I would give so many sequins if the business were finished that day. The officials in question were more obedient to the sequins than they had previously been obedient to the repeated orders of the Shah and of 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, so that in three or four hours everything was settled all right. After dinner I was informed that I should go to receive the replies. A little later they brought the *khal'at*, i.e. the Persian robe, which the king is wont to give on similar occasions, as I wrote to your Eminence two years ago: and towards evening I betook myself to the Palace. Brought into the Shah's presence I received politely from him the replies desired. How much we have had to wait and endure, not only through the evasions of minor officials, how much from the shuffling of our good enemies or bad friends, God knows. But, if the Polish Jesuit Father who has been my 'sole Fidus Achates' can arrive in Rome with the replies,¹ as I and he much desire, your Eminences will hear what I am humbly laying before them, the tale of all that has passed in these 14 months, and they will remain greatly astonished at it.

"But in the end that Lord, Who is a helper for the suppliant, has so disposed it that there should come to the capital the French consul who is (stationed) at Shiraz: and he, having learnt the justice of our claim, has spoken in favour of it to 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh and the chief secretary of the Shah, so that little by little our business has taken on a turn for the better, and finally, thanks to God, is well ended. . . ."

All this effort was merely to obtain answers—which implied orders or edicts (*raqams*) for redressing grievances—to requests by the Pope and Emperor and king of France for justice and compensation in respect of damage done to the Capuchin missions at Tiflis and Ganjeh, as already recorded elsewhere; but it gives a graphic picture of the sloth and extreme venality and indiscipline of administration to which Persia had come by 1722: and, after so much effort and expense the scepticism of that remark in the Bishop's other letter of 22.2.1722² bears repetition here:

"How long these *raqams*, or edicts, will last and how they will be executed, God alone knows, because here it can truly be said: 'Nihil permanet sub sole'. . . ."

Of another letter³ to Shah Sultan Husain from Louis XV of France there is a copy in the archives; but from its date, 24.3.1722, it is evident that it could never have been delivered to that Shah, and whether to Shah Mahmud Afghan is doubtful: Archbishop Peter Martyr of Nakhchiwan had died there, 25.2.1721, and Fr. Archangelus Ferri from Brescia chosen in the

¹ Actually—on account of the Afghan invasion—Fr. Krusinski did not leave Persia till 1725, and had not reached Leghorn by 10.5.1727 (*vide S.N.R.*, III, p. 509). These letters of 1722 were presumably not delayed so long, and were not those mentioned by the Capuchin Fr. Felix on behalf of a Capuchin at Tiflis (*S.N.R.*, III, p. 571):

"In 1724 three letters from the king of Persia, then at Tabriz (?), for His Holiness, for the Emperor and for the king of France, sent via Astrakhan, as the way via Turkey was 'suspect', were given a pass by the Muscovites, but near Moscow by orders of the Senate the messenger was arrested and the letters taken away. . . ."

As to Fr. Krusinski, a letter from the Vicar Patriarchal at Pera (Constantinople) 10.12.1728 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 529) mentioned:

"Fr. Thaddeus, the Polish Jesuit, who was here in order to cross to Persia, observing that the roads were unsafe, left days ago to return to Poland,"

which is confirmed by Bishop Barnabas in his letter of 6.5.1730:

"From a Jesuit Lay Brother recently arrived I learn that Fr. Thaddeus, also a Jesuit, to whom my letters were entrusted, had gone off to Poland. . . . He did not, in fact, return to Persia.

² *S.N.R.*, III, p. 530.

³ *Idem*, p. 514.

ssion of the Sacr. Congregation, 15.12.1721,¹ as his successor actually was never consecrated owing to the Bull being twice lost on the way in the disorders of the time:

“24 mars 1722. Très haut, très excellent, très puissant, très magnanime et invincible
 “Prince, Notre très cher et bon amy, Dieu veuille augmenter Votre grandeur avec fin
 “heureuse. Comme Nous sommes et que Nous serons toujours dans la disposition de faire
 “connaître à Votre Majesté Notre attention à contribuer à l’accomplissement de ceux de
 “ses désirs, dont l’effort pourra dépendre de Nous, Nous espérons que Votre Majesté de son
 “costé Nous montrera qu’Elle a les mesmes sentimens à Notre égard par la protection
 “qu’Elle accordera au Père Archange Ferry de l’Ordre de S. Dominique, archevêque de
 “Naxivan. Nous la demandons à Votre Majesté non seulement pour luy, mais encore pour
 “ses Religieux et pour tous les autres Catholiques qui doivent être sous sa direction: et
 “Nous souhaitons en mesme temps que Votre Majesté ne doute point du cas que Nous
 “ferons de cette marque de son amitié pour Nous et de la sincérité de celle que Nous aurons
 “pour Elle. Sur ce Nous prions Dieu qu’il veuille augmenter Votre grandeur avec fin
 “toute heureuse. Ecrit à Paris en notre chateau Impérial de Thuilleries le 24 mars 1722.”

Almost simultaneously, 22.3.1722, Pope Innocent XIII wrote to the Shah a recommen-
 dation² for Fr. Archangelus Ferri, and for all Catholics in Armenia, which for the same reason
 probably was never delivered. . . .³

It has been previously stated that in 1719, owing to the bankruptcy of the French Royal
 East India Company, the Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites had found it necessary to dispatch
 to Paris—in order to save as much as possible of the capital of the Carmelite mission invested
 in that Company—the French Fr. Jerome François of S. Joseph. That he was successful, to
 some extent at any rate, may be surmised from the reference in that part of this work dealing
 with the Finances of the Mission to a special fund then created in France for the particular
 mission at Julfa, for which the Sacr. Cong. had never allotted a yearly allowance. Now the
 bishop of Isfahan wrote:⁴

“. . . On the 17th of the past month of December” (1721) “there reached here Fr.
 “Jerome, the Discalced Carmelite, in the capacity of envoy from the Emperor.” (He brought
 “a letter from the Emperor, and entered the city in state, and similarly went to the first
 audience with the king when he presented the letter.) “He has obtained two doubloons
 “of sustenance money for each day, in accordance with the liberal custom of this monarch
 “with guests coming from foreign princes: and such money is afterwards paid from day
 “to day in those villages in which he stays the night. This Father has made no disburse-
 “ments on the journey, as he brought only one single companion with him, a Lay Brother
 “of his Order,⁵ and two or three servants. Yet he entered the city in state and with an
 “escort of the staff and servants of the French and English consuls. Some missionaries
 “also accompanied him on his entering into the city, and to the audience with the king
 “when he presented the letter. He lives in a house assigned to him by the Court, and does
 “not allow his business to be known, but it is supposed that it is to establish a company of
 “German merchants. . . .”

But in the following month, 22.2.1722,⁶ Bishop Barnabas reverted to the matter:

¹ *Vide Acta* for 1721, p. 472, quoted in *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5.

² *Vide Arch. Secr. Vat. Epist. ad Princ.*, No. 95, p. 130.

³ The Vicar Patriarchal wrote from Constantinople, 10.12.1728 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 529):

“There is no hope at present of being able to send the Bulls of Mgr Archangelus Ferri, elected archbishop, . . . the
 “letters for the Sufi in question, which are with me, will no longer be suitable, seeing that at present the province of
 “Nakhchiwan is under the rule of the Ottoman Porte. . . .”

⁴ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 520, 14.1.1722, and p. 518, 10.1.1722.

⁵ This was Lay Brother Ferdinand, who remained at Isfahan till 1756 at least, the last of the Carmelites there.

⁶ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 530.

“ . . . The Carmelite Father, about whom I had written to you, although he entered the city to plaudits, and had brought a very civil letter, with the inscription in gold lettering and inside two medallions in gold, the one of them full of diamonds with the portrait of the Emperor, has remained confined, as it were, to his house for the past two months and has been unable to obtain from 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh a second audience to discuss his business which is said by all to be to the advantage of this capital. In the audience he had of the king, when he presented the letters, he had a place lower down than mine. With 2,000 scudi in presents, which they have distributed among many of the subordinate officials, the English obtained (permission) to go to the place which had been assigned for me: and by spending more money they were enabled to get into their own hands the very letter from the Emperor in order to learn its contents, and they had the time too to make a copy of it. That is the sort of system in which affairs go in this Court. . . . ”

* * * * *

* * * *

If for no other object than to assign a reason for the complete absence of any communication from Persia in the twenty volumes of the archives of the Sac. Congregation that cover the interval between the years 1721 and 1725, as also of letters from missionaries in the collection preserved in the Carmelite archives, it would have been necessary to relate, at any rate cursorily, the Afghan invasion of Persia, capture of Isfahan and the ensuing change of dynasty. The break with the past, with the settled, ordered and generally dignified government and life of the country which had prevailed for more than a century under the Safawi monarchs was, however, so complete that to it in more proximate or more remote degree may be ascribed most of the ills of the next two hundred years—the internal or tribal dissensions and rivalries, the obvious cracks in the structure of this huge but always loosely built empire of so many component parts and races from Georgians and Armenians in the far north-west and Caucasus to Afghans and Hazara almost on the slopes of the Himalaya, from Arabs beyond Basra and Baghdad to Turcomans and Mongols in the distant north-east: and with the loss of that hereditary stability in the Court at Isfahan, that solidity and continuity of rule to which the various races had become accustomed to look, there largely vanished also the culture, the urbanity and international outlook which through Shah 'Abbas had influenced his descendants and made them to remain in touch and correspondence with the West and admit, incidentally, Catholic missionaries to a privileged position. Materially, the economic life of the country suffered greatly, as the reports of factors and agents of the East India Company bear witness (e.g. in the Gāmburn diary—India Office records—of 8th April 1727:

“the kingdom is still disputed by many parties and factions . . . the cause of so general
“a decay of trade throughout the kingdom for these five years past but has even threatened
“the utter ruin of it”),

such evidence of its promotion as seen in Shah 'Abbas the First's search for markets for silk overseas and in the insistence of Shah Sultan Husain's Court on an establishment of direct trade with France ceasing with the disintegration of the centralized government and power which had marked the Safawi system of rule. Lust of autocratic power and of conquest make the brief domination by Nadir Shah one of those typical and arresting incidents of Persian history and an apparent break in the general decline. But for the rest, and in its soul as a nation, it was as if the country had raised round itself a wall of separation from the rest of the world, had elected to develop a fanaticism, an intolerance, contempt and ostracism of the rest of the world which exercised their baneful effect well into the twentieth century.

Despite savage attacks, provoked or not, which had from time to time from Shah 'Abbas I

onwards marred the policy of the Safawi monarchs towards their conquered races, there is plenty of proof that the Armenians and Georgians were flourishing and numerically large communities in Persia till the Afghan invasion. Within fifty years of it, however, Julfa had been almost entirely abandoned, even by schismatics, whose descendants form the stock of the present colonies in Baghdad and Basra: the Armenian population of the Nakhchiwan and Erivan districts had dispersed even as far as Smyrna, the last Catholics and their missionaries had left Persia. (Sir J. Malcolm's *History*, chapter XXII, p. 374, states:

"The Armenians in Persia are calculated on an estimate made by order of the bishop 'of Julfa at 12,883 souls—not more than one-sixth of their number before the Afghan 'invasion',

and his history was produced nearly a century later.)

It will be recalled how Bishop Elias of Isfahan had been assisted at Moscow at the end of 1700—according to the author of his *Vita*—by Shah Nawaz Khan, alias Vaqtan or Vactanga, brother of

"Gurji Khan, the Georgian prince who had been making war for five years previously on 'Shah Sultan Husain',

and was very friendly with Czar Peter. Restlessness in Georgia against Persian rule and relations of the Georgian princes with the Czar were thus already existent when in 1704 Gurji Khan, governor on behalf of the Persian suzerain, aware of the oppressive rule of the eunuchs at Court, revolted and attempted to make himself independent; but abandoned by his principal adherents and after remaining an outlaw near Ganjeh for several months he was obliged to fly from the country. However, a third brother or cousin, Khusru Khan, was at that period Diwan Baigi at Isfahan, and by the latter's powerful mediation it was only a short time before Gurji Khan was reinstated in his governorship of Georgia. This event was followed by the arrival at the Persian capital of an ambassador from the Mogul emperor of Delhi, sent to demand restitution of Kandahar, which for over fifty years had been under Persian suzerainty, and its province, a move which alarmed the Persian Court and determined the dispatch of a strong governor likely to defend Kandahar against aggression from India. The Georgians were considered among the most valiant and reliable fighters in the Shah's dominions, so Gurji Khan was bidden to enrol as many of his compatriots as he could, and in the sequel marched from Kandahar with 14,000 [*? sic*], while as 'locum tenens' his brother, Khusru Khan the Diwan Baigi, remained behind in command in Georgia.

'Arrived at Kandahar, the Georgian commander victualled the town and its three forts 'against a siege of three years: and soon becoming suspicious of the loyalty of Mir Wais, 'a Ghilzai by race, Kalantar of the town, and finding that the Shah and eunuchs at the 'Court paid no attention to the reports he communicated about the intrigues and riches 'of Mir Wais and the largesse the latter bestowed on the common folk to grow in influence 'and gain adherents, Khusru Khan ordered him to quit Kandahar within three days and 'betake himself to Isfahan.

'When Mir Wais reached the capital, knowing he was under suspicion, he feigned to be 'a Muslim of great piety: his temper was pliant and supple, he lived in some splendour 'and before long he won over to himself a party at the Court. He became welcome as a 'guest at the houses of the chief officials, and proceeded to intrigue with the two chief 'factions, praising Gurji Khan to the pro-Georgian party, while representing him as ambi- 'tious and tyrannical to the other, to whom he insinuated that the Georgian troops would 'better be replaced by Persians.

'Astutely working on the Shah's known esteem for piety and regarded at length as a 'Mulla', or highly devout person, he obtained permission to go on pilgrimage to Makkeh

‘(Mecca). There, the exercises of a pilgrim at an end, he embarked on another course of intrigue. While at Isfahan he had observed how weak the whole Persian structure had become, and had formed plans for his own personal aggrandizement. So he proceeded to sound the ‘Ulama at Makkeh, like himself Sunnis, on what purported to be two scruples of conscience—whether in the existing oppression in Persia, whereby the exercise of religion was hampered and its laws neglected, it was legitimate to seize an opportunity to seek freedom from such a yoke, and whether the oath of allegiance extracted could be disregarded in view of the heretical tenets of the Persians, their traffic with the infidel Georgians, for instance.’

Fr. du Cerceau’s edition of Fr. Krusinski’s memoirs, in explaining how bitter by 1700 was the feeling the Sunnis entertained for the Shiah sectaries—

“they hate them to such a degree that, they commonly say, ’tis not so great a sin in the case of wilful murder to kill forty Persians as to kill one Christian, and that in lawful war ’tis more meritorious to kill one of those than forty Christians’ ”

—refers to the denunciation or manifesto which the Sunni ‘Ulama at the Holy Places published when Shah ‘Abbas I was encouraging Persian Shiahs to make Mashhad in Khurasan their main place of pilgrimage, not Makkeh and Madineh, quoting from *The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire in 1670*, chap. 10, book 2:

‘By virtue of the authority I have received from Muhammad himself . . . I publicly pronounce that it is lawful for any believer of whatsoever nation, to destroy and root you out. If he that killeth a rebel Christian doeth a thing agreeable to Allah, he that killeth a Persian doeth one that deserves a reward seventy times greater. I hope also from the divine majesty that in the day of judgment he will make you serve in the place of asses for the Jews that that miserable race, which is the contempt of the world, may mount and trot with you to hell. . . .’

Such sentiments were reciprocated with interest by ‘Abbas I, who caused his Shaikh-ul-Islam to include in an excommunication of the Sunni Turks the hope that the ‘excrements of the Armenians might fall on the head of the Khalif ‘Umar’: and, wrote Fr. du Cerceau/Krusinski:

“this imprecation is continued even to this day” (i.e. 1722) “in Persia and, as often as the Mullahs call the people from the top of the mosques to come to prayers, they finish their invitation with that pious ejaculation”.

A statement well nigh incredible!

It was a light matter, then, for the ‘Ulama consulted at Makkeh to furnish a Fatwa in writing, legitimating any rebellion in such circumstances: and with that Mir Wais returned to Isfahan, where by presents from Arabia and politic behaviour he strengthened his influence.

At this point a digression has to be made because the strange case of Israil Ori comes into the picture. Fr. du Cerceau’s book states:

‘This Armenian adventurer was born at Kupanlu in Persia: and, after travelling through France, Italy, Germany, selling coffee to the armies, he enlisted as a soldier in the troops of the Emperor Leopold, and obtained the rank of a subordinate officer. An intriguer, he got access to the officials of the Court of Vienna and, with his knowledge of oriental languages, contrived to be sent to Constantinople to sound the disposition of Turks for the peace later concluded at Carlovitz. Thence he passed into the service of the Czar of Muscovy, and was made a colonel of his troops, and also dispatched to Constantinople

'on a mission, which he executed so satisfactorily that he was in a position to ask as a 'reward for an appointment as ambassador to Persia. Ambassadors paid no customs dues 'in Persia, and Israil Ori proposed to carry with him a great quantity of merchandise. 'With the appointment from the Czar in his pocket Israil Ori went off from Muscovy to 'Vienna, where by virtue of his past connections and Imperial service he also obtained 'letters from the Emperor to the Shah. Finally he went to Rome, where, giving out that 'he had much credit with the schismatic Armenians and would engage to bring them to 'the submission and union so ardently desired in Rome, he succeeded in getting a Brief 'from Pope Clement XI¹ for the purpose.'

That Brief was in fact dated 15.7.1705 (*Arch. Vat. Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 84, p. 192) and, though it commended Israil Ori to the favourable notice of Shah Sultan Husain, its contents inadverted once more to the oppressive conditions prevailing in Nakhchiwan for the tholics, so that many of these Christians had preferred to go into voluntary exile and live Turkish territory, and it reproached the Persian monarch for not remedying them:

"Pope Clement XI to the illustrious and most puissant king of the Persians. Illustrious "and most puissant king greeting and the light of Divine grace. . . . Since therefore Our "beloved son Israil Ori has particularly deserved Our Pontifical high regard by the excep- "tional integrity and honesty of character with which he is endowed, by his fidelity and "prudence as well, We wish to fortify him, as he is setting out thither, with this Our "favourable opinion and testimonial, whereby we declare to You that it would be truly "gratifying to Us if You were at Our hint to receive him willingly, listen to him kindly and "aid him in those matters consonant with equity and reason he will ask of You.

"But on such an occasion We cannot but set out to You frankly that to Us and to the "other Christian princes it is very serious and annoying that some of those who in Your "name rule over the provinces of that most extensive country treat ill the Christian natives "and inhabitants, no small portion of whom, since they felt and perceived themselves to "be ceaselessly the object of plots and false accusations, preferred freedom and tranquillity "before possessions and property, and emigrating from Your country took care to seek "refuge with other princes. This state of affairs, besides being exceedingly prejudicial to "Your laws and interests, in nowise contributes to the commending of Your reputation "and to no small extent it alienates from You the hearts, as We have said, of the princes "and kings, between whom and Yourself old-time friendships exist. For they take it ill "that that very same religion, which they themselves profess as being especially pleasing "to God and salutary to man, should be held in contempt and hatred there.

"Now, although We, rightly judging about You, are convinced that all this" (persecution): "has been done not only by no command of Yours, but rather entirely without Your "knowledge, or at least when You were preoccupied by the false charges against the "Christians themselves (for why should You, who covet the fame of being a just and gentle "monarch, suffer the innocent to be punished?), in order to preserve Your reputation for "fairness it is necessary that You openly curb the license of Your subordinates so that it "may become known to everyone that for all those who are prepared to obey just laws "(and the mode of life of Christian men is certainly such) it is safe to dwell in Your domin- "ions. Meanwhile deeming that due weight will be given by You to advice which proceeds

¹ Of this there is confirmation in a note from the Secretary of the Sac. Congregation de Prop. Fide to Cardinal Paulucci, 1.1708 (*S.N.R.*, III, p. 332) asking for a search to be made in the Secretariat for Letters to Princes, to see whether in the year 1700 a letter or Brief were written to the Elector Palatine or to the king of Persia recom- mending an Armenian, Israil Ori, and asking that credence be given to what he might represent in the name of His 'Holiness and the Holy See, and also to discover whether a similar letter were issued in the beginning of the reign of 'Clement XI. The reason is that news has been received . . . that the said Israil Ori is a heretic and well-known 'schismatic, and that with those letters he goes persecuting the Catholic and Armenian Uniats, falsely asserting that this 'is the wish of the Pope. . . .'

: Secretariat for Briefs, 13.7.1708, replied:

'sending a copy of the Briefs issued about Israil Ori. . . . It is now thought the letter of credence was issued at the request 'of the Elector Palatine.'

"from the kindness of heart and sincere affection of the Pontiff We again and again commend to You the same Israil who will explain to You in more detail Our meaning, and beg also for Your Highness from Almighty God true salvation, which cannot exist without Himself.

"Given at S. Mary Major, Rome, the 15th July 1705."

Then the Jesuit Père Champion from the mission at Shamakha wrote:¹

"Israil Ori, an Armenian by race, arrived in Shamakha, 5.2.1708, taking the style of 'an ambassador from the Pope to the king of Persia. Having gone to pay my respects 'I was told by the ambassador that in the Holy Year 1700, having been sent to Rome by 'the Elector Palatine, he there had many secret conversations with Cardinal Albani, then 'Secretary for Briefs, and that Pope Innocent XII charged him with a letter to the Shah 'of Persia for the good estate of the Catholic religion in those parts, but that he was unable 'then' (in 1700) 'to make the journey to Persia because the Elector Palatine sent him to 'the Czar of Muscovy in the interests of the Emperor. Meanwhile Pope Innocent XII 'having died, his successor Clement XI sent to Vienna another letter for the Shah of 'Persia, in which His Holiness declared that all that Monsieur Israil Ori might propose 'to his Majesty according to justice would be in the name of His Holiness. The contents 'of this letter of our lord Clement XI Monsieur Israil Ori has put in writing and handed 'to me. I observed in conversation that M. Israil Ori the Armenian is a real heretic and 'on his arrival permitted that the heretic Armenians should publish in their church an 'excommunication of the missionaries from the Pope, asserting the persons excommunicated 'to be rogues and liars, and forbidding any Armenian to communicate with them. . . ."

The Carmelite Vicar of Julfa, 2.4.1709, mentioned in a letter to Rome² that:

"An Armenian, a Persian subject, born in Gilan, with the object of escaping the payment 'of customs-duty has arrived with a 'standard of the Pope', saying that he is an ambassador 'to promote the union of the Armenians with the Catholic Church. This man, named 'Israil Ori, is an uneducated man of no position; but the Catholics, deeming him to have 'obtained these papers from Rome by misrepresentation, paid no attention to him: so on 'the Armenian feast-day Israil went to the Armenian schismatic church and took communion. . . ."

Notwithstanding his credentials from Rome this individual did speak in a hostile manner of the Catholic missionary Orders at Julfa and, as the result of the adverse reports to Rome on the subject of Israil Ori's reprehensible conduct, Pope Clement XI had a Brief discrediting him written to Shah Sultan Husain, 2.3.1709 (*Arch. Vat. Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 87, p. 33): no further credence or respect was to be paid him. The Brief ran in fact:

"Illustrious and most puissant king, greeting and the light of Divine grace. As it 'appertains to Our office with every good office of Our charity as Pontiff and father to 'come to the help of Catholic Christians adhering to and united with the Roman Church 'who dwell in various parts of the earth however remote, so that by Our assistance there 'may be gained for them the favour and good graces of their princes, whose dominions 'they inhabit perpetually or else resort to them, We have considered that this point 'especially is to be given attention by Us and taken up with Your Highness both on account 'of the evident amplitude of Your grandeur and might, and because We think You to be 'fair in mind towards all men but particularly well disposed to Christ's faithful, as also 'because We promise Ourselves much from Your marked and sincere goodwill in Our 'regard.

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 334, 4.4.1708.

² *S.R.*, vol. 573, p. 48.

"So, willingly embracing the opportunity offered Us some years ago by there coming to Your parts Israil Ori, recommended to Us on the testimony of many, We determined to hand to him to convey to You Our letters given him under date 15th July 1705 in which, besides a courteous and indeed earnest and careful recommendation of Israil himself, on whom We relied that he would attend to the affairs of the Catholics with all energy and assiduity and that fidelity to which he pledged himself, We expressly begged of You as being the principal object of Our letter and the chief point of Our desires, that You would give instructions for the Catholics attached to the Roman Church living in Your realms, or at one time or other entering those parts to be used and treated humanely by Your officials and that in no wise would You allow that they should suffer unjustly any harm either in their persons or in their property, nor be molested by the plotting and false accusations of certain men who, since they are deserters from Our Faith, consider nothing more important than bitterly to pursue the true Catholics and to involve them in every kind of misfortune and straits.

"So with this mind and purpose We seized the opportunity and wrote to You; but not without an immense sorrow of Our heart We have learnt repeatedly that the aforesaid Israil Ori has recklessly abused that same commission from Us and has entered on a path there directly opposed to Our wish; and the aid for the Catholics, which he had distinctly asserted he would bring, he has afforded so negatively that he has rather disquieted them greatly and afflicted them and, what is most iniquitous, he has advanced apostates from Our Faith over the very Catholics and thus error over truth, and that he has forsooth so conducted himself as if he had been dispatched there by Us to oppress the true sons of the Roman Church, whose welfare, liberty and immunity, had he been mindful of God the just judge or wished to accommodate himself to Our desires, he ought especially to promote.

"Consequently We deemed it worth while that You should know that Israil Ori is unworthy of any confidence or of Your authority or of any mark of respect, but rather he should by Your instructions be discouraged from wicked attempts against Catholics, who agree in unity of Faith with the Roman Church, and to whom, indeed, We hope that You will show Yourself favourable in all things. Correspondingly from Us, where there shall be the means, You will receive a very copious return in those things which We shall consider acceptable to You. Given under the Fisherman's ring, the 2nd day of March 1709, in the ninth year of Our Pontificate."

It is hardly credible,' remarked Fr. du Cerceau in his edition of Fr. Krusinski's work, how much this "embassy", so inconsiderable as it was, alarmed the Court at Isfahan. The numerous retinue, some 200 persons still when it reached Isfahan: a speech at Shamakha in which Israil Ori had claimed to be descended from the ancient kings of Armenia, and not to have renounced his rights: in Persian fashion the Court officials suspected an ulterior motive, backed by the Czar of Muscovy. The French envoy, Michel, in Persia at the time, intensified the scare by explaining to the courtiers that an anagram of the name Israil Ori is "Il sera roi"!¹

'Mir Wais could not imagine how persons at the head of affairs in a great country like Persia could be so deluded as to be alarmed over a phantom, such as Israil Ori's chimera of the re-establishment of an Armenian kingdom represented; but he perceived the opportunity it afforded him to advance his own intrigues rapidly. He pretended to be seriously impressed by its latent dangers when in conversation with the faction of 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, suggesting that the Georgians might be also at work to obtain autonomy with the help of the Muscovites, who since the defeat of Charles XII of Sweden at Poltava, 8.7.1709, had risen greatly in prestige as a Power, and pointing to the presence at the Czar's Court

On his arrival in Isfahan he was accorded the usual marks of respect, managed successfully his surreptitious trading res, and then left the country, dying at Astrakhan some years later, a "staunch Catholic", *vide* Fr. du Cerceau's work.

'of the Georgian Shah Nawaz Khan.¹ Was it not, therefore, dangerous that this other 'Georgian prince should be in a position in Kandahar to cause the Afghans to rebel simultaneously, or to deliver it to the Mogul Emperor. . . . Nothing loth, 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh 'and his Georgian faction moved the Shah to return Mir Wais to Kandahar, honoured with 'a *khal'at* and given more ample powers than previously: he even bore an express recommendation from the Diwan Baigi to his brother, to treat Mir Wais as a warm friend of 'their house.'

At the end of May 1709, then, Mir Wais was back in Kandahar, and lost no time with his partisans² in plotting and carrying out a 'Sicilian Vespers' for all the Georgian garrison, Gurji Khan being assassinated and a Kandahari mob of some 3,000 slew the thousand Georgians scattered about the town. He then proceeded to urge the Kandaharis to deliver themselves altogether from the oppression of the Georgians and in fact from the tyranny of Persian domination. Misdoubts and qualms of some notables at the wisdom of revolting against Persia were stifled by the Fatwa from the 'Ulama of Makkeh: and in this way, the fanaticism of the Kandaharis being brought into play, they determined on revolt under the leadership of Mir Wais. The latter by couriers dispatched to Isfahan bemused the Court there, representing the massacre of the Georgians as a natural outburst of a population inflamed by the licentiousness of the Georgian troops, the outrages committed by them against Kandahari women: and for 1½ years he contrived to keep the officials at Isfahan in the dark as to the real position in Kandahar, and to have any action to reassert the Shah's authority postponed. It was 1711 before the supine Shah and his courtiers perceived that an important province was in danger of being lost and effectual measures were planned for its reduction. A force of Georgians was collected and placed under the command of Khusru Khan, the Diwan Baigi of Persia, whom some³ describe as brother and Fr. du Cerceau as nephew of the assassinated Gurji Khan; but the anti-Georgian faction in the capital succeeded in spoiling the unity of the force by insisting on a body of 6,000 Persian troops being added and commanded by one of their own race: and instead of the 200,000 Tumans promised for the expenses of the expedition Khusru Khan was furnished with only 50,000: as controller or steward of the household of Khusru Khan they put an individual in treasonable correspondence with Mir Wais himself, to whom all plans were disclosed from the Georgian camp. Delays by the intriguers at Court in payment of the money, and in the Persian forces joining the Georgians, afforded time for Mir Wais to gather from a wide distance round Kandahar all foodstuffs and fodder, and then lay waste the country. The expedition was thus vitiated from the start.

As to its commander, Khusru Khan,—for a brief while the recital of the Afghan epic being left—it may be observed here with regard to the Georgians in Persia, at that time largely employed in positions of authority as well as military, that evidently by *force majeure* these men were made or declared Shiah Muslims: actually there were numbers who clung in secret to their Christian antecedents. Thus, 20.7.1707, feast of the Prophet Elias, the Carmelite Vicar Provincial, Fr. Hugo of S. Dionysius,⁴ "had the consolation of baptizing ten Georgians after "they had received instruction"; and in *S.R.*, vol. 564, p. 390, will be found a large document in the Georgian script—a beautiful work of calligraphy deserving to be more widely seen than possible in its present position—in which 'Leon' (Khusru is the equivalent for 'lion') wrote to the Sacr. Congregation, styling himself 'supreme judge' (=Diwan Baigi) of Persia and 'king 'of Georgia', who had been a hostage in person for his brother, a feudatory of the Shah. He stated that three years previously, by orders of the Shah, he had been to Tiflis to take possession and set up his son as 'viceroys' and explained how he had abjured his Christian Faith because of persecution, and now desired to be received and recognized—in secret, however—as a Christian and Catholic by the Holy See. There are also on record a long letter in Latin from

¹ The name spelt as Nazar 'Ali by Fr. du Cerceau.

² Krusinski's *Memoirs* indicate that Mir Wais intrigued with, and brought in, the Baluchis: Fr. Basil of S. Charles' letter of 29.1.1710 (*S.N.R.*, III, p. 369) also says: "the Baluchis had subjugated Kandahar province".

³ e.g. Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia in his *Viaggi*, and Fr. Jacques Villotte, *S.J.*, 18.8.1710 (*S.R.*, vol. 575, p. 208).

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 561, p. 258.

the Carmelite Fr. Basil of S. Charles dated Julfa 20.1.1708,¹ in which he warmly espoused the request of the Georgian 'patriarch', who wished to become a Catholic *secretly*: another signed by the Carmelite Vicar Provincial Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, dated Isfahan, 22.8.1709;² and a third by the Jesuit, Fr. Jacques Villotte in Rome, 18.8.1710,³ with regard to the Georgian prince 'Leon' (Khusru Mirza), brother of Gurji Khan who went to Kandahar as commander-in-chief being himself 'chief judge' of Persia, and to the overtures of the 'patriarch' of Georgia and Khusru Mirza his brother to the Pope, desiring to be allowed to profess the Faith *in secret*. The applications were disallowed by the Sac. Congregation—the minute being "not allowed by the decrees".)

To the Cardinal Prefect, 29.1.1710, Fr. Basil of S. Charles, then at the Residence, Shiraz, wrote the following letter in Latin:⁴

"From Aleppo on the 13th September last I was informed by Fr. Ferdinand that your Eminence had honoured me with a letter, which up till now has not reached me: it would be great joy and a singular consolation to me to receive and read it. I conjecture that it was about the conversion of that prince who is persevering in all sincerity in his intentions, and who from a motive of devoutness and reverence asked to have the Apostolic blessing.

"But, as to his having proposed to hide his intention, it is of course understood that legally, when neither asked nor questioned, he is not obliged to betray himself: he is, however, prepared to reply explicitly and affirmatively, if he were to be interrogated, even if he had to die for it. The king (Shah) himself knows that he is pretending" (i.e. to be a Muslim), "but because he is a prince and he" (the Shah) "has need of him, he" (Shah Sultan Husain) "dissembles" (i.e. keeps the matter secret, says nothing) "and does not force him.

"Now this person is on his way to Kandahar as commander-in-chief, in order to recover for the Shah that province which the Baluchis, rebels of old against Persia, have subjugated.

"When, in accordance with orders, I came to Shiraz, he received the Holy Sacraments from me in his house with devoutness and veneration; at the end he said to me: 'Good-bye, when you are free, come to me, wherever I may be, for I do not want to be without you, in whom alone I trust.'

"Besides there are others with him, who have made their confessions and abjured" (their schism), "and your Eminence may believe that, when there be occasion for it, I neither give absolution nor do I overlook. For here I seek nothing beside the glory of Him to Whom glory and honour essentially belong, and the salvation of souls. Your Eminence will perhaps deign to give orders for a duplicate of your letter to be written to me. We know your Eminence to be kindly disposed towards us, and for that return you our best thanks: I am proud to be under your protection, with which and blessed by your holy hands and aided by your regard I remain

"the humble devoted and most obedient servant of

"your Eminence, fr. Basil of S. Charles Dis. Car."

In that connection Bishop de Galiczen wrote from Erivan to the Comte des Alleurs, French ambassador in Constantinople, 21.9.1711:⁵

"Fr. — did not find at Isfahan Fr. Basil the Discalced Carmelite, to whom I had addressed some letters from Constantinople for Mgr the Bishop of Baghdad, as—according to what I heard in Tiflis—for a long time past he has been with the Georgian prince, commander-in-chief of the army of the king of Persia which has recovered Kandahar and seized the water of the fortress, where the rebel had retired. . . ."

¹ S.R., vol. 563, p. 415.

² *Idem*, vol. 575, p. 208.

³ *Idem*, p. 210.

⁴ S.N.R., III, p. 369.

⁵ S.R., vol. 587.

Unfortunately, that news was incorrect as regards the recovery of Kandahar. The account given by the Carmelite Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia in his *Second Journey*, as well as that in Fr. du Cerceau's recension of Krusinski's memoirs, indicate that, no sooner arrived before Kandahar with the country around devastated, discord arose between the Georgian and Persian troops, the latter complaining that the former were favoured by the general in the distribution of victuals. Unable to stand the heat and in want of forage the Persians demanded to be allowed to retreat. Khusru Khan covered it, remaining himself with a rearguard of Georgian troops; but the traitor steward of his household had decamped and disclosed the position to Mir Wais, so that the latter issuing from Kandahar with a large body of Afghans and (or Baluchis) was able suddenly to fall on this rearguard and cut to pieces the Georgian commander-in-chief, Khusru Khan, and all his men, before routing and making a slaughter of the Persian troops and looting their luggage. (Sir J. Malcolm in his *History of Persia* wrote: "This action was very bloody: out of 25,000 Persians 700 only are said to have returned home.") Finally Mir Wais decided to attack the separate main body of the Georgians which had been falling back in another direction; but he and his men were checked and repulsed by a troop of some 500 Georgians, who cut their way through the Afghans and caused the latter to break off the pursuit, and return to Kandahar, laden with booty, however.

Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, then Vicar Provincial of the Carmelites, confirmed the news, 28.2.1712,¹ to the Cardinal Prefect:

"I already have written of the death of the Judge" (i.e. Diwan Baigi) "of Isfahan who, 'having become general of the army, was killed at the siege of the town of Kandahar, 'and with him was killed Fr. Basil of our Order, who had been sent for by him for the 'sake of religion. . . ."

Thus it came about that one of the Carmelites of the Persian Mission found death on the battlefield and a grave in the remote country of Afghanistan. Fr. du Cerceau's edition of Fr. Krusinski's memoirs refer to Khusru Khan as

"so unhappy as to renounce the Christian religion for the Muhammadan in order to 'secure his right to the principality of Georgia, which he enjoyed with the title of governor 'in the name of the king of Persia. But he afterwards repented of it and he was resolved 'to abjure Muhammadanism, happen what might, and to return to the Church, as soon 'as his expedition to Kandahar was at an end, with full purpose, if it must be so, to sacrifice 'his principality to his religion. He had actually begun to make a declaration of it, by 'causing a cross to be placed in his main standard. The missionaries had not a more 'declared protector in the kingdom of Persia. He carried with him in his expedition to 'Kandahar . . . a Carmelite named Fr. Basil. . . .

" . . . After the death of Khusru Khan, prince of Georgia . . . Vaqtan (or Vakhtanga) 'eldest of the surviving princes ought to have succeeded him; but, because he could not 'do so without changing his religion, he chose rather to renounce his right and title. That 'brother, who followed him, being already 'patriarch' of Georgia, offered to turn Mussulman and take a wife, quitting the patriarchate for the principality. But their father, 'who was Diwan Baigi at Isfahan [? *sic*, *vide* the letters of the missionaries above] did not 'approve of the 'patriarch's' proposal and found means to cure him of it by a good number 'of lashes on the soles of his feet, by which he confirmed him in his patriarchate. Meantime 'a third brother, who was not under the same obligation, turned Muhammadan and was 'made prince of Georgia. The Court was so disgusted with the repudiation by Vaqtan 'that they banished him to Kirman. After a few years of such exile he became more 'pliable, and great promises were made to induce him to take the turban: as soon as that

¹ S.R., vol. 587, p. 134.

“was done, he had all the rights of primogeniture restored to him and was installed Prince of Georgia.”

But that was already at the end of 1719.

‘After the disaster to this second Georgian expedition against Kandahar in 1711 the Court in Isfahan was in such consternation that for two years nothing was done, and at the end of every two years they made a half-hearted and mismanaged attempt: such troops being fortunate which could be extricated without much loss. Georgian offers to return to the attack, provided all sums stipulated for expenses were paid and only Georgian troops used, were rejected: and so matters stayed until Mir Wais died a natural death at Kandahar in 1717, having on his death-bed advised the notables to make peace upon any terms, should the Persians persist in attacking Kandahar, but to go and attack them, even up to the gates of Isfahan, should they go to sleep over these hostilities.

‘His son, Mir Mahmud, was then hardly 18 years old, but inured to fighting from childhood, and popular with the Afghan soldiery: So a brother of Mir Wais—Mir Aslan by name—was first recognized as their leader by the Kandaharis. He was cautious and planned to send deputies to Isfahan to treat for an accommodation, semi-autonomy, and a reduction of tribute. Getting to know this, Mir Mahmud murdered his uncle at night, and cut off his head: he then beat the alarm from the fort, and harangued the soldiery, urging them on to war, and denouncing the treachery of peace with the Persians. Accepted by the soldiery as their general Mir Mahmud proceeded to raid the neighbouring Persian provinces, and to win over the Shiah clans of the Hazara to joint action. The next Persian expedition also failed through incompetent generalship, and finally the Court at Isfahan, apprehensive at the alliance between border tribes hitherto divided by religious differences, became roused to the extent that Fath ‘Ali Khan, ‘Itimad-ud-Dauleh, a Lesghian of Daghistan (who had been largely responsible for the ruining of the Georgian expeditions), arranged to send his relative, Lutf ‘Ali Khan as commander of a new force.

‘The latter, being ambitious, planned to begin with a spectacular exploit, viz. to seize from the Arabs Masqat, but he required ships to transport his soldiers across the Persian Gulf and for the purpose negotiated for Portuguese vessels on payment. Portuguese ships duly arrived, but the money was not sent through intrigues of those at Court jealous of him succeeding; and the fleet went away, nothing done. At this juncture in 1720 Mir Mahmud made a raid on Kirman, “300 leagues from Kandahar” and took it. Before he could fortify himself, Lutf ‘Ali Khan, the Persian commander, attacked and, routing the Afghans, pursued them to the gates of Kandahar; but harvest was over, and a summer siege was inadvisable. Marching back Lutf ‘Ali Khan proceeded to strengthen the citadel at Kirman, and then to lay in provisions for a winter campaign against Kandahar. It was then that, as already related in this chapter, the Persian general committed the mistake of ravaging the lands of his enemies at Court, and so provoked the downfall and blinding of Fath ‘Ali Khan the chief Wazir and his own arrest and confinement in November 1720, and the break-up of his force.

‘Not only was Mir Mahmud the Afghan thus again free to pursue his own plans, but evil councillors of Shah Sultan Husain, the Hakim-bashi and others led him to commit another grave error on the northern frontier.

‘On returning at the end of 1719 to his country after his period of exile in Kirman, Vaqtan (or Vakhtanga) the Georgian prince found that the Daghistani Lesghians had cruelly ravaged Georgia and Guria: and he determined to crush the Daghistanis once and for all: his winter campaign reduced them to such straits that they appealed to Isfahan, whence the Shah by his councillors’ advice sent imperative orders for the Georgian operations in the field to be abandoned immediately. Vaqtan obeyed, but with such rage in his heart that he made an oath never to draw his sword again for the Shah, and then shut himself in Tiflis after securing the Georgian frontier against the Daghistanis. No sooner

'released of that menace, the Daghistani Lesghians, on the pretext of the disgrace of their fellow-tribesman, the blinded 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, took advantage of the chaotic conditions then prevailing in Persian administration to pour down, in the spring of 1721, from their fastnesses to the fertile region of Shirwan, and plunder Shamakha.'

The foregoing is a précis of the details given in Fr. du Cerceau's edition of Fr. Krusinski's memoirs: in the few letters from 1720 of Bishop Barnabas Fedeli, O.P., extant, there are some isolated references to the rapidly increasing disorder in the country.

On 16.12.1721,¹ from Julfa to the Cardinal Prefect, he alluded to:

"the evil plight of this country part of which has been seized by the rebels, and part sacked by enemies. . . . The" (new) "'Itimad-ud-Dauleh is an intimate friend of the Armenian bishop of Julfa. . . ."

"10.1.1722.² . . . Affairs in this country are always going from bad to worse, because it is troubled in many directions by enemies, rebels and traitors. Here too some surprise is feared. The Lord God help us!"

"14.1.1722. Julfa.³ . . . Truly it can be said that the Shah is being impoverished, for he incurred very great damage by the loss of Shamakha with all that fertile province last year: and in this direction other enemies are devastating the country . . . and there is no hope for it to be able to recover, except after a long time."

Nothing at all of the gathering storm appears to have been foretold by any Carmelite, Dominican, Augustinian, Capuchin or Jesuit pen in 1721-2 or, at any rate, to have reached Rome.

From the Afghan invasion till the rise of the Zand tribal rulers in the south is a little known part of modern Persian history: European writers on it are few. It is cursorily treated by Sir John Malcolm, who had to compile his material nearly a century after the events he records, and few dates are furnished by him. The Polish Fr. Krusinski (in Fr. du Cerceau's version of his memoirs) was an eye-witness till the year 1725 only, when he left the country: that account has been commended by recent specialists and authorities on Persian literature and studies. But for clearness of chronological treatment and graphic narrative the chapters devoted to the years of turmoil as far as the death of Nadir Shah in his *Secondo Viaggio* by the Carmelite Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia may be claimed to be some of the best, if not the very best. Fr. Leander was in Isfahan some ten years after the invasion and acquainted with leading inhabitants and commanders of troops (some of whom he cites) and undoubtedly checked his data from, and closely followed the story in Fr. Krusinski's memoirs, for he quotes from them: he also had the advantage of hearing from Fr. Philip Mary and other missionaries first-hand accounts, and reading all they had recorded by way of diary in the years of Afghan and Nadir's rule. He was stationed at Hamadan in 1735 and thus facts about the siege of that town were well known to him: during the time of Nadir Shah he was not far away in Mesopotamia. Interested in medicine, and practising it during part of his residence in the East, Fr. Leander was one of the outstanding writers on the East among those Fathers sent by the Discalced Carmelite Order to their missions: it is no more than a tribute to his memory and gifts that a summary of his description of the manner of the Afghan invasion and its results till the reign of Nadir Shah should here be given. The extent of, and ever-increasing, turmoil resulting from the invasion needs to be followed year by year in order to comprehend why the possibility of work of the missions became more and more limited. But, where necessary, omissions and details will be supplied to his narrative from the work of Fr. du Cerceau and from the remarks in the diaries of the Factory at Gāmburn of the East India Company, and letters from the Carmelites and others:

'At Kandahar, on hearing of the folly of the Shah and his entourage in ridding themselves of their best general and experienced minister of state, Mir Mahmud became emboldened

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 525.

² *Idem*, p. 518.

³ *Idem*, p. 520.

'once more and, having realized the confused and disorganized state of affairs at the capital, seized the opportunity and decided to carry the struggle for Kandahar into the centre of Persia. He had some 3,700 Afghans from Kandahar, who had been with his father, and with two thousand of them he persuaded or constrained 8,000 of the Hazara to join him under their chief, Muhammad Wali. Mir Ashraf, son of the uncle he had murdered, was chosen as his colleague, and some 9,000 Baluchis having also agreed to make common cause, in a few months a force, estimated to have been 40,000 combatants, had gathered in the hope of plunder, for whom during all 1721 provisions and fodder were collected. At the end of December 1721 Mir Mahmud left Kandahar: by the end of January he had again laid siege to Kirman and occupied the town—the citadel had been so well fortified by Lutf 'Ali Khan as to hold out till 1725. Many of the Afghan force deserted there—14,000 are Fr. Krusinski's figures—and returned to Kandahar, so that Mir Mahmud abandoned the siege and set off on his march to Isfahan; parched grain was the food for all. According to Fr. Krusinski's record, Europeans in Isfahan, observing through telescopes the Afghan camp during the siege, made estimates of between 8,000 and 14,000 men in the attacking force: for reasons which he adduces Fr. du Cerceau finds 40,000 with 60,000 baggage camels the more likely figure (Fr. Leander gives 40,000 camels, 22 elephants): to a modern observer in Persia commissariat and transport arrangements of that magnitude are hardly imaginable in the circumstances, and, knowing the inability of local inhabitants to estimate with moderation, he would be inclined to credit much less than half the figures given).

The edition of Fr. Krusinski's memoirs implies that the march, after leaving Kirman, was direct across the desert to Yazd and Isfahan. As to the correctness of that, and the date of departure from Kirman given above there is a remark in a letter of Bishop Barnabas which raises a doubt: writing 14.1.1722,¹ i.e. at least 10 days after the news would have got through from Shiraz, "... in this direction ... enemies are devastating the country. ... They have already reached Shiraz, so that here they" (the Court) "live in very great apprehension. ..."

'At Isfahan no preparation for defence was made: and the invaders were only two days' march from the capital when the Shah's advisers raised and sent out a force to oppose the Afghans, some 50,000 men' (again, the warning to cut down drastically Persian estimates is needed) 'under the new 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, and Muhammad Wali, shaikh of Hawaizeh in Khuzistan, 'Ali Mardan Khan of the Bakhtiari, and a Georgian prince, Rustam Khan, brother of the late Khusru Khan. At Gulnabad, four leagues from the city, battle was joined, 8.3.1722: the Afghans remained masters of the field, with the royal treasure chest and camp in their hands: 2,000 of the Shah's force are said to have been killed, 340 on the Afghan side, among them a principal chief of the Hazara with 500 wounded. Notwithstanding, after the battle the Afghans considered themselves lost: they had no knowledge of the extent of the advantage they had gained and for some days remained inactive in their camp: 25 cannon that had been taken were brought off the field without opposition by some Persian soldiers. In a council of war, 11.3.1722, Mir Mahmud voiced his suspicion that the Persians wished to draw them into an ambush: it was deemed prudent to retire the force to Kirman, reduce the fort there, and make that city and province Afghan territory: the date of the retirement was fixed for Thursday, the 15th [*sic*] March. To cover it, however, it was decided on the 14th to send a body of some 9,000 men towards the city in order to alarm the citizens: these mounted men were to follow the retreat as a rearguard two days later. This was done.

'But on the night of 17.3.1722 a letter from the Persian Court reached Mir Mahmud to the effect that Shah Sultan Husain offered to surrender Kandahar to him and his descendants and in addition pay over a large sum, provided only he would withdraw his force to Kandahar. Thus unexpectedly the prospect of failure turned to victory: rarely in history has a throne and succession to an empire been more easily won. Even then the

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 520.

'Afghans did not give way to an excess of confidence, or abandon a sense of respect for 'the Safawi monarchy and its representative: to be independent and free from aggression 'in their own country might have sufficed them: the Indian *dai*, attendant and instructor 'of Mir Mahmud's early years, in the council of war suggested that the Shah be invited 'to give one of his daughters in marriage to Mir Mahmud and assign the two Afghan 'provinces of Kandahar and Hazara as her marriage portion, an oath on the Quran to 'accompany the gift and investiture. The pride of the effete Sultan Husain could not 'however stomach the giving of a daughter of his to a rebel of no lineage'—(strange, if true and the main reason for refusal, when the customs in his own 'Haram' are recalled)— 'and he allowed to pass neglected a course which might have saved his throne and spared 'Persia years of horror and turmoil. Worse, his suspicions or his advisers prevented measures 'of defence from being taken; though the Armenians, many of them sturdy muleteers, were 'ready to defend Julfa, he gave orders for all Armenians to collect with their arms on the 'great Maidan of Isfahan on the 19th March, and there and then he caused them to be 'disarmed, when on the contrary he should have put a strong force into Farrahabad to 'act as a screen for the defence of the capital.

'On the same day the Afghans entered the suburb of Farrahabad, where the Shah's 'pleasure resort was: on the next night they took Julfa by assault after two hours' opposition 'from the Armenians. The latter capitulated and were taken to Mir Mahmud at Farrahabad: he demanded a fine of 70,000 Tumans, and fifty of the handsomest girls to be 'sent to his camp, well clothed and with jewels. The Armenians actually did send the 'girls, but bargained to pay the money after Isfahan had been captured, saying that their 'money and goods lay in the city. The Afghans agreed on condition that they should first 'make a perquisition in the houses so that in the end the Armenians were in worse case 'than if they had paid the fine; for the Afghans let the Armenians understand that they 'did not believe there was enough in Julfa to pay the sum stipulated and, having need of 'ready money, they would content themselves with what was then in Julfa and wait for 'the rest. So the houses must all be searched and a just account rendered. But the search 'became a pillage, with the exception of murder every sort of violence being used, gold, 'silver and jewels being seized, men bastinadoed and tortured to disclose where their 'valuables were. 40,000 pounds were said to be found in the house of Aratun Shariman, 'for instance. The Afghans even sold at nominal prices to the poor what they had plundered 'from the rich.

'On the other hand the Isfahanis (not taking into account that they had deprived them 'of their arms) looked upon the Armenians as traitors for surrendering their township. 'When, after the second general assault on Isfahan, 23.3.1722, Monday in Passion week, 'the Afghans were worsted (and might have been driven off the ground, had the Shaikh 'of Hawaizeh not refrained from joining with his Arabs in the combat) and were in doubt 'whether they had not better after all retire on Kirman, they asked the Armenians of Julfa 'to negotiate; the miserable Armenians dared not accept the office, though probably it 'would have saved the dynasty. For they realized how greatly the Court and city people 'were incensed against them, "the very women . . . in the markets, loading them with ' "curses, threatening to tear the Armenian children out of their mothers' wombs: if ever ' " . . . the Persians should again be masters, the Armenians need look forward to nothing ' "but quitting the country. . . ." ¹

'On 21.3.1722 the attack on Isfahan began, but the two bridges across the river were 'guarded, and the Afghans could not carry the city. Mir Mahmud decided to blockade 'it, laying in forage during the next month or so and devastating villages near at hand, 'while constantly keeping the Court occupied with the discussion of terms of peace. On '1.5.1722 he captured the Abuzabi bridge, the Georgian guards being drunk or asleep: 'and he was then able to block all roads to the city. Various small forces collected in 'various parts of the country round were beaten off and dispersed by Afghans on approach-

¹ Quoted from Fr. Krusinski's *Memoirs*, p. 51, vol. II, and p. 88 respectively of Fr. du Cerceau's edition.

'ing Isfahan, in particular five thousand men from Luristan gathered by 'Ali Mardan Khan 'the Bakhtiari and sent to Kashan. An uncle, a younger brother and two cousins of Mir 'Mahmud were taken and put to death by villagers after one encounter, and thence onwards 'he took no more prisoners but massacred all. Shah Sultan Husain had summoned to his 'aid Vaqtan Khan or Vakhtanga, that Georgian prince whom the Shah had offended in '1720 by ordering him to desist just as he was about to crush his Daghistani enemies—and 'unpardonably, for he kept to his oath and refused.

'Tahmasp Mirza, third son of the Persian monarch, who had been declared successor 'to the throne, escaped in disguise and got away to Gilan, where, however, he neglected 'opportunities of gathering men and falling on the Afghans: he was no more the man for 'an emergency than his father. Safi Mirza, the eldest son, afterwards got away to Stambul, 'it was said. The Shahsavan tribe, many thousands strong—they had been 'planted' by 'Shah 'Abbas the First—refused to fight too. The Persian commander inside the besieged 'city proved utterly craven, putting off the people whenever they pressed to be led out in 'force against the enemy, many indeed escaping with the connivance of the Afghans: when 'they finally rose and insisted on being led in a sortie, it was half-heartedly given and failed.

'In July, when there was still beef to be had, famine began, a consequence of the bad 'advice of the Shah's entourage once more, for they, as if there were not enough people 'in Isfahan to consume provisions, had one ordinance published after the arrival of the 'Afghans prohibiting anyone from leaving the capital, and a second even more foolish, 'authorizing the admission of inhabitants of neighbouring villages and towns.¹

'By August only the flesh of camels, mules, horses and asses was to be had, as much as '1,000 scudi being paid for a horse for food. Dogs and cats were being eaten in September 'and October—there was already no corn in the former month: many human bodies were 'to be seen with various members cut off: some taken eating human flesh were bastinadoed 'for it, but the punishment did not stop the evil growing: children were devoured by their 'own mothers. The chronicler alleges the mortality to have been computed at the time 'as one million' (as the total population of the capital could not have been much, if at all, in excess of that figure, it should not be taken seriously; but Persian estimates of distances are always underrated, of all other numbers extravagant). 'Corpses thrown into the 'Zayindehrud fouled its water for a year to come: the air stank. Long previously Mir 'Mahmud could have made himself master of Isfahan; but, such was his indifference to 'human life, so insatiable his greed that he refused even when urged by his chief leaders, 'because he did not want the treasures of Isfahan to fall to his soldiery, were the city sacked 'after an assault. It was 21.10.1722 when, famine having at last taken hold of the palace, 'Shah Sultan Husain brought himself to abdicate and, clothing himself in black, bare-headed, accompanied by a few eunuchs only, left the palace on foot to go through the 'city and prepare the people for the next act. The weeping and wailing in the streets was 'heard as far away as Julfa, it was said.

'On 23.3.1722 the Afghans sent horses into the city for Sultan Husain and his chief 'attendants, there being not one left in Isfahan. The people are said to have been in tears 'to see their king in such grievous case. At Farrahabad, though the Afghan leaders had 'begged Mir Mahmud to go to meet him not as king but as his future father-in-law, the 'son of Mir Wais the Kalantar refused and did not move from his sofa, waiting for Sultan 'Husain to enter the room and bend his knee.

'If Mahmud the Kandahari showed baseness according to a European standard of 'chivalry, the great-grandson of Shah 'Abbas I and erstwhile monarch of a vast kingdom 'is depicted as displaying a despicable abjectness—it could hardly have been real humility 'in such a man: as soon as he saw Mir Mahmud he hastened with open arms to embrace 'him, kissed him with tokens of friendship and then drew from his breast the sign of royalty, 'the aigrette, which he put in the cap of Mahmud, while in the presence of the chief men 'of the two nations he declared him his successor on the throne of Persia, to the exclusion

¹ Quoted from Fr. Krusinski's *Memoirs*, p. 51, vol. II, and p. 88 respectively of Fr. du Cerceau's edition.

'of his own sons and their heirs. He begged only that the Afghan would not interfere with 'the ladies of his andarun, nor let the princes residing therein want, that he would not 'heap new taxes on the people.

'Mir Mahmud is said to have relaxed a little of his haughtiness and indicated to Sultan 'Husain to sit on his left. The latter then made over the sealed paper by which he transferred the sovereignty of Persia on two conditions—his own honour and life, and the lives 'of his family. After prayers by an Afghan Qazi the notables paid fealty to Mahmud as 'Shah, and a body of Afghan soldiery was sent into the city to take possession and proclaim 'a general armistice.

'Shah Mahmud, as he must henceforth be styled, on 24.10.1722 made a parade march 'through the capital to display himself to the people:¹ he took his seat, too, on the royal 'throne. Victuals were allowed to enter the city, so that as much bread might be bought 'for a crown as the day before would have cost two hundred: and the famine gradually 'ceased. On the following day he imprisoned his cousin Mir Ashraf, with whom before 'leaving Kandahar he had sworn to halve all gains and remain equal in all things: all 'those Persians, who had entered into relations with him and proved traitors to the ex-Shah 'Sultan Husain, he had arrested and killed, the general Muhammad Wali being alone 'spared, but his chieftainship of Hawaizeh given to another. Except for an Afghan Diwan- 'baigi, whose justice was dispensed with more honesty and equity than Isfahan had seen 'for many decades, Persians were reappointed to the chief offices. All November was 'spent in putting the city in order. In December, however, in order to capture Tahmasp 'Mirza, the fugitive son of the ex-sovereign, Shah Mahmud sent six thousand of his own 'troops to Qazwin. The Safawi prince made off to the province of Gilan; and, when the 'Afghan leader Amanullah occupied the town and began to let it be looted, the citizens 'rose and slew four thousand of his men. With barely a thousand, himself wounded, 'Amanullah reached Isfahan, 9.1.1723; and this so alarmed Shah Mahmud, lest the 'Isfahanis should act similarly, that he determined to put to death all notables among the 'Persians, and soldiers of the ex-Shah. He invited on 25.1.1723 some 300 notables to a 'banquet, where all except some twenty-five were slain barbarously on their arrival at the 'palace, their dead bodies after being stripped were flung out into the Maidan naked. 'Two days later he had two hundred youths, sons of leading men, slaughtered in a field 'outside the city—"like hares", wrote the chronicler. On 31.1.1723 it was the turn of the 'soldiers of the guard, some three thousand Persians, who had previously sworn allegiance 'to the new monarch and were being regaled on pilaf and meat: while they were eating 'their arms were taken from them and they were put to death in the courtyard of the palace 'by Afghans. All February soldiers of the ex-Shah were sought out, and killed wherever 'found. Besides eliminating all likely resistance in the neighbourhood, any local revolt, 'this bloodthirsty man seemed determined to depopulate the city, turn out the inhabitants 'and replace them by others. It is not surprising, then, to read that by May 1723 Isfahan 'was again a prey to famine; the villages round, being sacked by Shah Mahmud's men, 'would not bring provisions into the city, whereon the Afghan leader Nasrullah attacked 'Najafabad and other important villages and deprived them of their beasts of burden.

'In August 1723, the same leader having arranged with Sunni tribes between Hamadan 'and Kirmanshah, and as far off as Sanneh and Tiflis (the Kandaharis were of that branch 'of Islam), thousands of their camels arrived laden with provisions, and more than 10,000 'Daghistanis in particular entered to settle in Isfahan, being enrolled as soldiers. In June 'caravans totalling 30,000 camels had arrived from Kandahar, bringing women and 'children and numerous recruits: a second convoy of 8,000 came in May 1724: a third of

¹ According to Fr. Krusinski's *Memoirs* Mahmud

"was middle-siz'd and pretty squat: his face livid, his nose flattish, his eyes blue and squinting a little, his look fierce. . . .
"His neck was so monstrously short that his head seemed to grow to his shoulders. He had scarce any beard, and what
"he had was carrotty. His eyes were generally downcast. Every morning he exercis'd himself in wrestling half an hour
"with some of the most robust of his officers: and spent the rest of the day in other exercises proper to harden and
"strengthen his body. . . ."

'3,000 animals with the mother of Shah Mahmud in 1725. She had no women, no officer, no servants with her, when she crossed the Maidan and came to the principal gate of the new Shah's palace half naked, what clothes she wore in tatters, ravenously gnawing a great radish, more like a witch than the mother of the despot of a wide empire.

'Early in 1724, with 6,000 Daghistanis included in his force, Nasrullah was sent to occupy Shiraz, the chief town of the great province of Fars, and all the Persian Gulf. But the Shirazis resisted and Nasrullah was killed by a bullet in the chest while advancing to the assault. His successor as commander of Afghan troops, Zabardast Khan, proceeded to reduce Shiraz by famine and, when several thousand had died of hunger, got possession and had governor and garrison put to the sword. The Afghans had, however, lost 2,000 men in the sorties and skirmishes. Of the 400 of them sent to take possession for Shah Mahmud of the small places on the coast the climate is said to have accounted for all but a tenth: most of the local inhabitants to the east migrated across to the Bahrain islands: only Kung and Bushire surrendered.¹

'To proceed with the conquest of the kingdom which, it would seem, had not accepted as binding the transfer of sovereignty made by Shah Sultan Husain to an alien rule and race, Shah Mahmud at the head of his forces in May 1724 attacked the township of Gulpaigan in the province of Isfahan and took it: Kashan then offered to submit. For three nights after the return of the troops to Isfahan the city was illuminated. Almost at once Shah Mahmud set off for the province of Khuzistan in the south-west, bordering the Mesopotamian marshes; but the heat, almost as much as attacks by Arabs, obliged him to return after most of his force and baggage had been lost. No less than 50,000 Tumans are said to have been distributed to women widowed by this abortive expedition. Still, at the end of the year many fresh recruits arrived from Kandahar, and even Turks as well as more Daghistanis were enrolled.

'The people of Yazd and its district had cut off and killed a large number of the Afghan recruits on their way across Persia: it became the turn for chastisement of Yazd, where the Gabrs' (Zardushti and fire-worshipping survival of the ancient, pre-Muhammadan race) were supposed to favour him, and Shah Mahmud arrived before the town at the end of December, only to find the surroundings devastated by the Yazdis themselves: and their sorties put his soldiery to flight. He lost all his artillery in a stream, and retraced his steps to Isfahan, considering these two checks as a punishment of Allah: in propitiation he went and lived in a cave for forty days, emerging debilitated and half demented, thrown off his balance all the more by news of the escape from the "andarun" (where Shah Sultan Husain and his family had remained confined) of Safi Mirza, eldest son of the ex-king.

'From then on Shah Mahmud seems to have determined to get rid of the rest of the Safawi family, lest they should become potential enemies: on 7.2.1725 he sent for all the princes to be brought to his presence in the courtyard of the palace, had their arms bound behind them, and then with the aid of two executioners he personally cut off their heads, only two young children escaping by throwing themselves into the arms of the ex-Shah, whose hand was actually cut by the stroke of a scimitar aimed at one of them. "Some say one hundred and fifty, others one hundred and eighty perished in this massacre," remarked Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia, "but the Carmelite Fr. John Joseph of S. Antony makes this incident happen shortly after Mir Mahmud won the throne, in 1723, and says that only thirteen princes were then slaughtered, their bodies being left lying in the court where they had been killed, all the reign of Mahmud. In any case, the flight of Safi Mirza provided the motive for the act."

'The insanity of Shah Mahmud increased, he tore his own flesh, his body became loathsome with a disease resembling elephantiasis: even the schismatic Armenian bishop and priests from Julfa were summoned to read the Gospel over his head. But after receiving

¹ In their diary of 8.4.1727 the Agents of the East India Company at Gāmburn wrote: "*Should the Afghans get possession of this place, it will . . . be . . . with the good consequence of opening communications . . . to Isfahan*"; i.e. it was not yet in Afghan hands. But 25.12.1728 they write of having paid a visit to the Afghan Khan: and 21.3.1728 they refer to men of Zabardast Khan arriving from Shiraz.

'news of a fresh set-back of their comrades at Qazwin the Afghans in Isfahan, instead of 'choosing the brother in Kandahar of Shah Mahmud, went to the prison where Mir Ashraf 'had been confined for nearly three years and offered to release him, if he would accept 'the sovereignty. He agreed on condition that first the head of his cousin the Shah were 'brought to him. After having had to overcome the resistance of some five hundred of 'the Shah's Hazara guards the mutineers entered the palace and, having suffocated Shah 'Mahmud with a pillow, decapitated him. Thus perished after a brief and bloodthirsty 'reign effective over no more than the centre of Persia the bold man who had destroyed 'the Safawi kingdom: he was not 25 years old: this was in April 1725.

'Mir Ashraf, passing through the courtyard on his way to the royal apartments, is said 'to have observed the remains of the Safawi princes, and ordered them to be put in chests: 'on four camels they were taken to Qum, one thousand Tumans being distributed to the 'keepers of the shrine in that town so sacred to the Shiah (the eyes of the Christian Georgian 'camelteers were put out on arrival—the unfortunate men were considered to merit, as 'bearers of such dire misfortune, the punishment of never seeing any other sight). The 'ex-Shah Sultan Husain had been caused by Mir Ashraf to witness this act: whether in 'suspicion, or mockery, or earnest, Mir Ashraf then proposed to the deposed monarch that 'he should resume the throne and even threw the emblem of sovereignty at the feet of 'Sultan Husain, while condemning the conduct of Shah Mahmud. The Safawi declined, 'lamented his cruel treatment by the dead Afghan and begged Mir Ashraf to accept in 'marriage one of his daughters: he was rewarded by the doubling of the allowances Shah 'Mahmud had made him—fifty Tumans weekly—and allowed to occupy himself with the 'building of the great palace at Farrahabad begun in his own reign but not completed.

'Hardly any less cruel and savage than his predecessor would Shah Ashraf seem to have 'been. On the day following his accession he ordered the Hazara guards of Shah Mahmud 'to be decimated in the Maidan of Isfahan: all confidants of his dead cousin were also 'killed: eight days later he had all principal Afghans who had rebelled against Mahmud 'arrested: some he had killed, others imprisoned. Amanullah Khan the general had had 'himself crowned king in Qazwin, so he was killed: the mother of Shah Mahmud was sent 'back to Kandahar.

'Meanwhile Tahmasp Mirza, the fugitive heir of Sultan Husain, from Tabriz had 'harassed the Armenians with constant exactions, so that some forty thousand of them are 'said to have retired to the mountainous country on the borders of Greater Armenia: he 'tried to use force and was beaten off.

'In 1724-5 the Ottoman Turks seized the opportunity of the internal strife to annex 'Persian territory at three points in the frontier marches. 'Ali Sarkash Pasha invaded 'Georgia, the chief town of which, Tiflis, had already been destroyed by the Daghanis: 'Gankeh capitulated after two days' investment. Tahmasp Mirza thought it better policy 'to fight the enemy from outside before taking up the struggle with the Afghans and, 'changing his attitude towards the Armenians and having successfully begged their assistance, defeated the Turks of the army of 'Uthman Pasha, which retired to Kars. Instead 'of marching at once on Isfahan he went, however, against the other Turkish army which 'was devastating the Georgian country, and was badly beaten; so that, after passing the 'rest of 1724 in the high mountains of Armenia he crossed to Mazandaran with only 8,000 'to 10,000 men, and spent his time in intrigues with Qajars and Georgians, and receiving 'luring messages from Shah Ashraf to meet in conference.

'A second Turkish army under 'Uthman Pasha of Erzerum—whether before 1724 and the retirement on Kars, or in 1725 is not made precise in the accounts of Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia and Fr. du Cerceau—'entering by Erivan, there put 30,000 Armenians to the 'sword: and at the end of two months by the mediation of the patriarch of Echmiadzin 'the citadel of Erivan was surrendered. Tabriz was besieged' (and, as already related, 'Uthman Pasha was one of the first killed when this city was assaulted): 'many thousands 'were killed then, and more taken away and sold as slaves.

(No wonder, therefore, that with such destruction of human life, by both supernatural and human agency, for 80,000 inhabitants is the estimate of those killed in the great earthquake of 1721 in Tabriz, Fr. Leander asserts that "the Armenian race in Persia was "so diminished from the time of the arrival of the Afghans, i.e. in 1722 up to 1725, that "200,000 may be reckoned as having been killed and taken away as slaves.")

¹In September 1724¹ Ahmad, Pasha of Baghdad, took Hamadan by assault. Of this 'some interesting details are given from Fr. Leander's own knowledge from his residence 'in that town some years later, and may be briefly quoted:

"On the west it had a narrow fortification . . . but it was entirely unprovided with "any sort of artillery when the Turks, to the number of 160,000, came to besiege it "under the command of the famous Ahmad Pasha, son of Hasan, Pasha of Baghdad, "who died in Kirmanshah on that same expedition and was replaced by his son in the "year 1724 [*sic*, for 1725] in the month of October, being then Pasha of Basra. He "came and placed himself before Hamadan in order to besiege it, and left behind 30,000 "Turks dead there, although the city was not provided with cannon, and was surrounded "with walls of recent erection. At that time there was there in our house (which was "built by Monsignor Picquet) Fr. John Joseph of S. Antony, a celebrated missionary, "highly respected by all Persians, who had recourse to him in order that he would be "so good as to cast for them a bronze cannon. He begged to be excused, saying that "he did not know how to assist them, but, as they began to use him roughly and ill-treat "him, he was constrained to do his best to get to work. So he had a great bar of iron "made, wrapped it up well in paper and, having made a mould from beaten clay, "fitted the bar inside it: then, having got the molten metal ready, he had it poured "inside. From the exterior the cannon seemed very well made, but they could never "extract the bar from the inside, although they worked on it for days: and, then, the "paper catching fire, the metal became joined to the iron, so that it could never be "extracted. If this operation had succeeded, perhaps the Turks would not have taken "the town, seeing that, when about that time there was fired against them a single shot "of grape from a wooden cannon, which was well hooped with iron but burst into a "hundred pieces, it caused the whole Turkish army to retire a distance of more than "an hour from the walls besieged. But the work of the friar, who knew nothing of the "trade, being wasted, shortly afterwards the city was taken by assault and for the space "of two days continuously Turks and Persians were occupied in killing each other, the "latter yielding up to the former, yard by yard only, the streets which ran with blood. "Finally the Pasha had the gates opened, giving orders for an end to be put to the "looting, and that whoever wished should be allowed to flee as he listed, and thus "hostilities ceased and the Turks remained masters of the town. Fr. John Joseph, who "during the siege had remained hidden in a cellar of the house, on coming out was made "captive by a Turk, by whom, however, he was released through the work of a Catholic "Christian, who by exchanging a horse for him set him at liberty: and he was given "such assistance at general headquarters that the Pasha gave express command to all "his soldiers to give back to him everything they had had from his house, so that he "was once more put in possession of his house and church. The Turks remained masters "of Hamadan for eight years, and during that period plague reigned in that town, "which neither before nor after the Turkish occupation suffered from such sickness.

"In the month of May of the year 1726 the (Turkish) generalissimo wanted to make "himself master of the capital of Persia, where there reigned Shah Ashraf and, his army "having been increased to the number of 200,000 combatants, well provided with "artillery and munitions of war, he advanced² destroying all the villages which he met

¹ From the several letters of Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus quoted, 1724 is evidently the correct year, though Fr. Leander appears to give 1725 in his narrative for the taking of Hamadan.

² As far as 'Hurmadabad' [*sic*, Haramabad or Khurramabad] three days from Isfahan in Bakhtiari country, according to Fr. Krusinski's account, as given in Fr. du Cerceau's book.

"on the way. Four days' distance from Isfahan Shah Ashraf, who was the last king of the Afghan nation, met him with a small force of 11,000 to 13,000 mounted men. . . . The Persians remained masters of the field of battle and of all the baggage. . . . All "I have related as far as this, in addition to having seen it admirably acted, I have "myself heard related not only by many Persian soldiers on the very spot where they "had been present at the battle, but by the general himself, Ahmad Pasha, about whom "I shall have much to say later.

"Shah Ashraf, having won the victory, turned round with his force against the town "of Khunsar, which the Afghans had in vain tried to subjugate; but here his army was "routed by the townspeople, and the slaughter was so great on both sides that in the "month of June 1736, when I passed by there, there were still two piles—as it were two "large towers—composed of the heads of soldiers dead in that fight. Ashraf withdrew "to Isfahan with the few of his army whom he could collect: and Ahmad Pasha was "reinforced by more troops, remaining in possession of Hamadan."¹

By the end of 1725 the Turks were masters of Persian country for a wide belt from northern Georgia to Hamadan: and Shah Ashraf sent a mission to Constantinople to treat for terms, one of the assistant envoys being Emmanuel, son of Markar Shariman. But the Grand Vizir declined to treat with them and declaring Shah Ashraf an enemy of the Sultan sent them away. In 1726, therefore, a very large Turkish force invaded Persia and surprised Qazwin, but they found Isfahan too strongly protected by troops, and the Qazwinis revolted, so that the Turkish army retired into Georgia. In 1727 the Turkish army, which two years previously had taken Tabriz, was defeated by the Afghans; but the Afghans were three times worsted by the Muscovites in skirmishes in Gilan. Early in October of that year the Afghans gained another victory over the Turks near Shamakha, and then, having lost 150,000 of their troops their war-chest exhausted, the Turks consented to open negotiations for peace.²

¹ With that account of Fr. Leander, which seems entitled to credence because of his first-hand evidence, it is interesting to collate such notices as there are in the diaries of the East India Company's Factors at Gāmburūn (Bandar 'Abbas), which the India Office, London, possess from 1726 onwards, the only previous years recorded being 1708-10. It would appear that the European trading companies on the Persian Gulf were left for months together, sometimes, in ignorance of what was really happening up-country. Gāmburūn diary, 1.12.1726:

"There is a further account that the Turks from Baghdad have marched another army into Persia of 170,000 men, "under the command of Achmet Bashaw, late Bashaw of Basra. . . ."

Gāmburūn diary, 19.1.1726-7:

"Private shooters" (i.e. *shatirs* = runners) "came from Spahaun this day reporting that Shah Asaf marched out of "Spahaun with all his forces six days' journey, with a resolution to fight the Turks. It was given out just before they (the runners) "came away that the Turks were entirely routed by the Afghans."

Gāmburūn diary, Wednesday, March 1st 1726-7.

"Yesterday evening arrived shooters from Spahan with letters dated 30th November, 18th December, and 1st January. "Under the 30th November gives an account of the Afghans marching out of Spahaun the 10th of October last" (Fr. Leander wrote "May"—if he is referring to the same movement) "with 8,000 Afghans and 30,000 militia to engage the "Turks, who were on their march from Hamedoon. Eighteen days after they were met and fought them and the "Afghans at first had the worst, and some that fled arrived in the city with the news of their defeat, yet at last . . . "routed the Turks, killing as reported upwards of 30,000 men . . . the conquerors . . . also brought into Spahaun "45 pieces of brass cannon, 5 mortars, a great quantity of ammunition and baggage, so that it may be conjectured the "defeat was very extraordinary. The gentlemen" (i.e. East India Company's agents in Isfahan) "also advise that before "the king" (Ashraf) "set out on this enterprise he commanded all the Europeans to get ready to accompany him and, "tho' they excused themselves in the best manner they could, yet they were obliged to give a present of 40 tomanunds to "Imad-ud-Dauleh to have a Talligaw" (i.e. *t'aliqeh* = written permit) "of leave, for they consider'd to appear in "arms against the Turks might prove of very bad consequence. . . ."

² Thus far Fr. Leander; from the appendix in Fr. du Cerceau's book it may be added that,

'as signed between Shah Ashraf and the Saraskar Pasha in September 1727 and published at Constantinople, 18.11.1727, "the conditions included recognition of Sultan Ashraf as sovereign of Persia by any title he chose, and of his marriage to "Shah Sultan Husain's daughter: Tabriz and Hamadan and other Turkish conquests to remain theirs: Hawaizeh district "to be Turkish: Persians to be allowed to make pilgrimages to Makkah and to the shrines in Mesopotamia and to trade "in Turkey a sum to be voluntarily paid each year to the Sultan of Turkey by Ashraf: Tahmasp Mirza Safawi not to be "aided by the Turks.

"Simultaneously with the Turkish invasions in 1724 the Russians had seized all the west coast of the Caspian Sea and "the coast of Gilan for some 160 leagues in length, but for no great depth into the interior: and in 1728 Shah Ashraf "negotiated with the Czar Peter II by a mission sent to Moscow with rich presents a treaty of peace, which was signed "in Gilan, 13.2.1729, the Russians to keep all conquests on the Caspian, and from Darband to the river Araxes, while "Astarabad and Mazandaran were to remain Persian. All these efforts to be free from attack from abroad availed Shah "Ashraf little in view of his fate in 1729."

In Kandahar Shah Ashraf was opposed by the dead Shah Mahmud's eldest brother and rightful heir: being unable in consequence to obtain reinforcements thence, and seeing the number of his Afghan troops much depleted by all this warfare, he decided to enclose one-eighth of the extent covered by the city of Isfahan with new walls, so as to guard against a rising. In the north, in Mazandaran, many Georgians escaping from the tyranny of the Turks, and Armenians expelled from Shamakha joined Tahmasp Mirza: and from Khurasan the Safawi prince among other adhesions received one which was notable and disastrous for him—a robber band of an Afshar tribe led by a certain Hasan Quli son of 'Ali the camelteer, who was to become before long the redoubtable Nadir Shah, monarch of Persia himself. He appears to have been inspired with a patriotic Persian dislike of the alien Afghan domination and, having been sent some 400 men by Tahmasp Mirza, during the rest of 1727 and all 1728 employed his talents of leadership and strategy in freeing various towns from Afghan soldiery and from Afghan possession. As soon as the roads became practicable at the end of February 1729 the bands of Hasan Quli, joining the force of Tahmasp Mirza, compelled the Afghans to evacuate the towns of Mashhad-i-Sar, and Damghan on the slopes towards the Caspian, and then advanced on Isfahan. But first they attacked a force of Afghans south of the capital on the road to Shiraz, so that Shah Ashraf was made to come out with reinforcements (before doing so he had put in chains in the caravansarai the English 'ambassador' (? chief agent of the East India Company, and consul) named Rich, and the Dutch Factor, from whom he demanded large sums under penalty of death after his return to the city, if not paid.¹

Although Fr. Krusinski's memoirs are silent on the date, it would appear from Fr. Leander's chronological statement that it was at this critical juncture in 1729 that the Afghan ruler of Persia caused the ex-Shah Sultan Husain and four small boys of his family to be slaughtered. Thus perished, some 36 years after his accession to the throne, this debased and feeble heir of Shahs Isma'il and 'Abbas.

In the autumn of 1729, then, Hasan Quli the Afshar and Tahmasp Mirza attacked and routed the troops of Shah Ashraf, killing thousands in three hours it is said, and afterwards Shah Ashraf returned in the direction of Isfahan, intending to massacre the inhabitants and then retreat to Kandahar. But—to quote the words of Fr. Leander:

'having by their spies learnt early of the result of the fight the English "ambassador" and "Dutch Factor" warned the Isfahanis, who sounded a great bell under the arch of the city gate, usually rung only at times of triumph, while all drums were beaten. The defeated Afghan on approaching Isfahan took all that noise to mean that Hasan Quli and Tahmasp

¹ The news the Agents of the East India Company at *Gāmbrun* (Bandar 'Abbas) received of the course of events may be quoted from their diaries, for added to Fr. Leander's account they clarify them, and shed light on the confused state of the country.

"... Friday, 14.11.1729. Last night the Chief" (English agent) "received a letter from Shaw Hoshroff" (= Shah Ashraf) "desiring he would assist the Afghans in case they were distressed: he likewise wrote another of the same tenor "to the Dutch Chief" (agent), "and also sent orders to — Khan to put the forts into a posture of defence, and adds "that he had met and engaged Shaw Thomas" (= Shah Tahmasp's) "troops, but wanting ammunition, etc., he was "come back for a supply and would immediately return and try the chance of another battle . . . which to us seems an "evident sign that he has been beat. The Dutch by the same 'shotter' received a letter from their Chief in Spahaun "advising that Shaw Hoshroff, after his return from the first battle, hearing that the Prince's troops were nigh, set out "from Spahaun, the 10th of October, and that at the first village his artillery arrived it was seized by the inhabitants, "who immediately declared for Shaw Thomas. . . .

"Wednesday, 3.12.1729. . . . Advices from the Dutch Chief at Spahaun that Shaw Hoshroff, having advice that the "Prince's forces under Thomas Cooley Caun" (= Tahmasp Quli Khan) "his generalissimo were near approached that "place. He cut off" (i.e. killed) "most of the Persians and Bannians" (i.e. Indian traders) "plundered and burnt "the bazars, carried all the Europeans into a caravanseray near the palace and stript them to their skins . . . but on "the sudden approach of the Persian troops, the 2nd November, he immediately fled with all his treasure and about 2,000 "men, and the next day Thos Cooley Cawn enter'd the city with 8,000 men. . . .

"24.12.1729. Isfahan . . . wrote us that the Afghans kept them prisoners 17 days . . . before they left, but by "bribing the guard they (the English Factors of the Company) made shift to escape to the Company's Factory. . . .

"14.2.1730. By a 'shotter' from Spahaun we received a letter from the Resident and Mr. Geikie advising that by the "instigation of our mortal enemies the Dutch" (the Dutch are mentioned in these diaries as having seized the island of Hurmuz in 1728) "Thos. Coolie Caun on 24.12 1729 sent to demand 3,000 Tumans from our gentlemen under the "pretence that we had been guilty of rebellion. . . ."

'Mirza with their men had got already into the city, and turned round his own troops 'towards the south, only to be once more attacked and broken by the pursuit of Hasan Quli.'

Neither Fr. Leander, nor Fr. du Cerceau's book follows the second and last of the Afghan Shahs to his end: for that the East India Company's diary from Gāmburun, and other British sources afford some assistance, without being precise as to the date and place, e.g.:

"24.12.1729. This morning early arrived Shotters from Spahaun with letters dated 4th "and 9th November, from the Resident and Mr. Geikie advising us that Shaw Hoshroff, "after having been beat in two sett battles by Shaw Thomas, returned to Spahaun and on "4.11.1729, on receiving advice of the near approach of the prince's troops, left the city "and made his escape with his treasure, wives and children towards Shyrash" (Shiraz): "that Shaw Thomas' generall entered the city the next day and at once sent his troops in "pursuit of Shaw Hoshroff. . . ."

"3.12.1729. . . . Shaw Hoshroff was arriv'd in Shyrash. . . ."

"30.12.1729 (Tuesday). . . . The Afghans . . . marched off last night towards Lhor" (Lar). "6.12.1729. A man who came 17 days ago from Kirman says that Shaw Thomas' "deputy was arrived here, and had got possession of that city and that the Dargizzanies" (? Daghistanis) "had revolted from the Afghans, but that Abdullah Khan with about 500 "men was retired into the castle" (so that the route for any ordered retreat by Shah Ashraf "and his men via Kirman was blocked). Notwithstanding—after an interval of two months —came the report from Bandar 'Abbas, "10.2.1730. The linguist" (i.e. munshi or interpreter) "received a letter . . . that Hoshroff with all his troops which it is said amount "to 2,000 men under arms marched out of Lhor castle . . . generally believed that he is "gone towards Carmania (Kirman). . . . By a letter received from Kung this morning "advised that Hoshroff is still surrounded by the Arabs."¹

It is Sir J. Malcolm's *History of Persia* which states that Shah Ashraf was ultimately killed in the desert of Baluchistan by a Baluchi, who carried his head to Shah Tahmasp Safawi: it happened presumably, therefore, in February or March 1730.

The prince entered Isfahan, 7.12.1729,² to learn of the death of his father and brothers: having thus succeeded by inheritance and made good his claim he showed his gratitude to his Afshar general by bestowing on him his own name, relates Fr. Leander, so that for some years Hasan Quli was to be known as 'Tahmasp Quli Khan'.

With the year that saw the deaths of both the deposed Shah Sultan Husain and of the usurping Afghan Shah Ashraf it is perhaps well to bring this protracted chapter to a close (though it might be more logical to carry it on to the end of the brief reign of Tahmasp II and of the Safawi dynasty): this long historical digression taken from the narrative in Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia's *Secondo Viaggio* in the main and, checked by such facts and dates as are given in the diaries of the East India Company and references to Fr. du Cerceau's *History of the Revolution*, is intended to give those interested in the Carmelites and other missions a thorough appreciation of the terrible prostration and suffering which must have been brought on the inhabitants of the country, and on those of towns like Isfahan, Tabriz, Shiraz, Hamadan in particular from the attacks of rival forces, sieges and famines deliberately created by those forces, and from the slaughter and rapine during the twenty years following the arrival of the Afghans in 1722. Only thus will the causes for the abrupt disappearance not long afterwards of so much Catholic effort in Persia cease to remain inexplicable. It now remains to take note of such information regarding these years of upheaval, 1722–30, as is to be found in the few letters of the Carmelites and other missionaries preserved in the archives inspected.

Central Persia appears to have been strictly blockaded from early in 1722 and not only

¹ By 'Arabs' that tribe of the Khamseh of Fars is meant.

² Gāmburun diary of Friday, 16.1.1730, states that he entered 28.11.1729, but this, 7.12.1729, is the date in Bishop Barnabas' letter.

did traffic cease, but news hardly penetrated beyond the frontiers, e.g. writing, 6.10.1722, from Basra the Carmelite Vicar Apostolic of Baghdad diocese stated:¹

“ . . . For about 8 months all roads are blocked, and no one can travel by them. . . . ”
 “ 1.7.1723.² . . . I await the outcome of the Persian business to see whether I can go
 “ to Hamadan, because till now the rebel, who occupied Isfahan by dint of starvation and
 “ force, remains strong in that capital, having the Shah too in his hands, while the Shah’s
 “ son with a large force appears unable to defeat this rebel. Meanwhile there is no govern-
 “ ment in Persia and the whole country is thrown into confusion. . . . ”
 “ 9.11.1723.³ . . . now still less can I go ” (to Hamadan) “ because the Ottoman army
 “ has encamped there, wherefore the Christians have fled. . . . ”
 “ 8.2.1724.⁴ . . . it is about two months now that my companion ” (Fr. John Joseph)
 “ left Baghdad to go to his town . . . but he remains at Kirmanshah, a town in Persia
 “ four or five days’ distance from Hamadan . . . the fact is that the Pasha of Baghdad
 “ entered Persia with a strong army and among others occupied Kirmanshah in order to
 “ march on Hamadan, when the winter is over. . . . ”
 “ 29.6.1724.⁵ . . . My companion . . . was for three months at Kirmanshah. At length
 “ he reached Hamadan, but the Pasha of the city of Baghdad has died. All the roads are
 “ blocked, and the surroundings of Hamadan have become a scene of warfare between
 “ Turks and Persians. . . . ”
 “ 28.9.1724.⁶ . . . I write to inform your Eminence that after a siege the Turks have
 “ occupied the town of Hamadan at the cost of great bloodshed to themselves, and of greater
 “ bloodshed to the inhabitants, almost all of whom, it is said, were put to the sword. For
 “ a long time past I have been awaiting an opportunity to go to Baghdad . . . but all
 “ ways to it are blocked by the Arabs, who have also besieged this town (Basra). . . .
 “ There is still no communication with Isfahan, so that we do not know what is happening
 “ there, and whether our missionaries are alive or dead. . . . ”

Two and a half years after the first investment of Isfahan, and yet even at Basra they were still without news of the fate of the Europeans of Isfahan!—evidence of how completely the central plateau of Persia had been isolated. Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus again wrote:

“ 14.11.1724.⁷ . . . I had already written to your Eminence, and now write again to
 “ say that Hamadan, a town in Persia with a large population, was occupied by the Turks
 “ after a siege of two months, no one being spared—not even the Christians, except a few
 “ taken prisoners—so that there was a torrent of blood for three days on end, the sword
 “ not ceasing to shed it. My companion ” (i.e. Fr. John Joseph), “ who was there in the
 “ bishop’s House, was also one of the prisoners, and robbed of everything, and the house
 “ too, in which nothing remained, but some of the Turks occupied it. But now our house
 “ has been restored to us, and my companion is staying in it and already celebrating Mass
 “ in the church; but he got into debt in order to ransom himself from the Turks. . . . ”

From Constantinople there was similar admission of ignorance of what was passing in Persia. A report from Pera to the Sac. Congregation, dated 4.6.1723, remarked:⁸

“ Here one is unable to get to the bottom of the news from Persia owing, it is thought,
 “ to action by the government here (Constantinople) whom these revolutions do not please:
 “ nothing else has been learnt since Qazwin had been won by . . . new usurper to the
 “ throne of Persia . . . and already for 1½ years past merchants, who have interests in
 “ Julfa and Isfahan, have had no letters from those parts. . . . A commercial letter of last
 “ April from Aleppo states that great scarcity of food is reigning in Persia, and many are

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 203.

⁶ *Idem*, p. 584.

² *Idem*, p. 564.

⁷ *Idem*, p. 586.

³ *O.C.D.* 242 b.

⁸ *Idem*, p. 562.

⁴ and ⁵ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 582.

"dying of starvation: that was known from the frontiers, but from the capital no letters were coming. . . . Letters from Erzerum report that the best articles were being removed from Tabriz elsewhere, because the Afghan troops were drawing nearer and committing unheard-of cruelties. . . . Even the Georgians have put themselves on the defensive. . . ."

From Isfahan itself all that is to be learnt in the archives of Propaganda Fide may be judged from the following statement recorded in the transactions of the session of the Sac. Congregation, 2.7.1726¹ (i.e. more than four years after the Afghans had reached Isfahan)—present: Cardinals Sacripante the Prefect, Barberini, Spinola, de Polignac, Alberoni and others:

"Mgr the Patriarchal Vicar at Constantinople has forwarded to the Sac. Congregation two letters from Mgr Barnabas Fedeli, Bishop of Isfahan in Persia, from whom since the commencement of the wars which still continue in those regions no news had ever been received. The first of the letters in question is ancient, being dated 10.10.1722, and in it he refers to the very severe straits in which he was placed by reason of the famine then reigning in the country: and he asks for the reimbursement of the expenses incurred by him in presenting the Briefs of the Sovereign Pontiff and the letters of various Christian princes to the late deceased Sufi in order to obtain, as he did in fact obtain, reparation and compensation for the losses inflicted by the heretic patriarch on the Capuchin missions in Tiflis. The second letter is recent—written from Julfa, the 1st [*sic* 14th] October 1725 and is extremely short: and in it he begs to be paid on account of his annual allowances such sum as would be notified by Mgr the Patriarchal Vicar at Constantinople, to whom he had written to obtain it there for him either as a loan, or on interest, and to remit it to him, so that he might get some relief in the extreme misery in which he is placed.

"The said Patriarchal Vicar at Constantinople was, however, unable to find any means of relieving him, because of the difficulties in making remittances, for, though he indeed tried to arrange for a certain Emmanuel Shariman, secretary of the embassy sent to the Porte by Shah Ashraf, the present sovereign in Persia, to consent to take charge of it, the latter did not want to bind himself to carry money to those parts for the reason that, as trade between the two empires had once more been prohibited and the Porte had declared war on Ashraf, he could not be sure of not being arrested and plundered on the journey in company with the ambassador in question. The poor prelate still remains deprived of his allowances, which have accumulated for many years, the balance to his credit in account totalling, as he indicates, about 780 scudi: and there can be no other means of getting some money conveyed for his assistance, so the Patriarchal Vicar suggests, except that of Persian merchants residing in Smyrna, who, he says, are trustworthy and good Catholics."

The 'extremely short' letter of the 14th October² mentioned indeed merely has this note of general interest:

"Although I have written *some letters* to your Eminences since the arrival of the Afghans in this royal city, none the less I am certain that few will have reached Rome."

With that doubtless had travelled another letter, which he had previously, on 18.8.1725, written to his brother, Conte Joseph Fedeli:

"The road to Constantinople being now opened. . . . In the very great want which we suffered in the city three years ago, when the price of corn had risen to as much as 3 Tumans (i.e. 60 scudi of Milanese money) for the measure that equals 12 Romani: the price of rice to 4 Tumans, i.e. 80 scudi: at that time it was a luxury to eat not only horses, mules and asses, but even dogs and cats: then in the public square human flesh

¹ *Acta* of 1726.

² *S.R.*, vol. 653.

"was sold, and in the more distant streets were to be seen people dying of starvation cutting off the buttocks of persons not long expired, in order to cook and eat them.

"My great benefactor has been Monsieur Jacques Rosseau" (the Swiss watchmaker already mentioned) "who lent me much money then, for which I gave him a note of hand for 115 louis d'or. Last year he lent me more money, for which I gave him another note of hand for 85 louis d'or, to a total of 200. Recently, for other money I have had to give him a note for another 10 louis. Therefore I beg you to have this debt paid at once without any deduction to Monsieur Georges Rosseau, his brother in Geneva, handing him herewith enclosed a receipt for 750 Roman scudi addressed his Eminence the Prefect of Congregation of Propaganda. Meanwhile, as I am unable to have my allowance, I must live, not as a poor Religious, but as a miserable bishop, contenting myself with having one pupil who cooks my pottage for me and does for me the other necessary services. . . ."

Then there is this confirmation of the strange failure on the one hand to give news of their plight, and on the other of Rome to get succour through to Julfa at all costs, from Fr. Denis (Dionysius) a Capuchin of Isfahan who writing in Latin, 14.11.1728,¹ stated that he was aged 63, had been 47 years professed and 28 years on the mission, and explained that it was the seriousness of the position which compelled him to write, in the hope of preserving the ancient Capuchin mission at Isfahan:

"which many hardships—famine, wars and other misfortunes—are crushing, so that all these storms and commotions may be weathered, if the mission be aided and provision made for it. . . . Our superiors" (these Capuchins were from the province of Tours) "have not given a single reply to my letters for eight years past, so that I am weighed down by these calamities. Though saddened and worn out at length with vexation at their indifference, yet inspired with the spirit of my predecessors, who for more than one hundred years kept up this mission with dignity and respect, I have determined to apply all my zeal, endeavour, labours and diligence to preserving it. . . ."

This complaint was passed on by the Sacr. Congregation to the Procurator of the Capuchin Order, who on 10.5.1730 wrote in his reply his astonishment at it for, he said:

"it is in fact the first which reached here: neither have I, in the four years of my procuratorship, had any news at all of the most wretched state of the mission there, to restore which today the Fr. Provincial of the province of Tours will be warned to dispatch by the occasion of the first ship offering four missionaries endowed with zeal. . . ."²

On 14.2.1729 the General of the Jesuits informed their Eminences of the Sacr. Congregation that³

"on account of the warfare among the Persians for many years past the passes remain closed to such a degree that one part of the provinces cannot communicate with the others. For that reason the prefect of the missions of the Society of Jesus, who resides in the city of Isfahan, has no means of communicating to his companions in Armenia the faculties which the Sacr. Congregation has granted. . . ."

Of the Carmelites, Fr. Philip Mary from Julfa, 21.9.1724,⁴ wrote to Fr. Cyril of the Visitation, Vicar at Shiraz, after conveying his greetings to Fr. Antony Francis, the other Carmelite at Shiraz:

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 667.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 663, p. 326.

² There is no indication that more Capuchins joined their mission in Isfahan.

⁴ *O.C.D.* 238 u.

"to my very great sorrow I have learnt of the hardships and afflictions suffered by you during the recent revolutions. Glory be God who has preserved your persons. . . . I have written other letters to your Reverence, in particular after the death of our late Fr. Provincial and I gave much other information . . . but I gather that you have not received any of them. . . . I shall only say, dear Fr. Vicar, that in the five years that, unworthy though I be, I have been Vicar of this House of Julfa I have not had one single good day, having always had to live on alms and since the change of sovereigns, if I have not been actually beaten, I have suffered many other afflictions, in particular the famine at the time of the siege and later: up till now I have been and still am in a very hapless plight, having been obliged to sell some of the things belonging to the House, both in order to keep myself alive—I sometimes found myself with nothing but bread and water—as also to pay some debts contracted by me before the siege and others incurred during the siege after the death of our late Fr. Provincial. At present, the time to lay in stocks" (for the winter) "I have not a farthing. Blessed be the name of God! I have already written how we owed 25 Tumans to the English merchants" (i.e. the East India Company), "16 to the Dutch, with whom was pledged the greater part of the silver of our convent in Isfahan, but . . . which was taken from their residence there by the 'newcomers' (Afghans) . . . At our convent in Isfahan . . . there is Lay Brother Ferdinand, who had come from Europe with Fr. Jerome Francis, working in the garden with a servant: with fowls and other occupations they eke out a living. Fr. Jerome Francis continues to stay with Monsieur, the consul. Foodstuffs are dear: the batman¹ of rice costs 4 'abbasi, bread 11 and 12 bisti" (=5½ to 6 shahi), "meat 6½ shahi, eggs 1 gaz each" (1 gaz being the hundredth part of 1 qran) "fresh ones more, and everything else is dear. . . . We have never had one letter from Europe, and do not know who are our heads and superiors: we are living quite blindly, hoping only in the mercy of God, that He will one day will to free us from all our miseries, but also in fear lest one day or another worse may befall us. . . ."

In another letter of 17.11.1724² Fr. Philip Mary added the details:

" . . . if I have to eat soup I must make it myself, while many times I have not the wherewithal to make it: although I have a servant, as I am unable to keep one good at his work, he is good for nothing but to keep me company of nights and to fetch water for fifteen to twenty pupils whom I have. Our house at Julfa threatens to collapse and I cannot repair it; but I have busied myself in finding a few rafters to hold together some rooms in the big hall and the room adjoining, so that they do not fall down this winter. . . ."

Actual personal violence by the Afghans was spared the missionaries in Julfa, as Bishop Fedeli wrote, 17.3.1726 (*S.R.*, vol. 656):

" . . . This mission . . . is enjoying its former liberty in the matter of ecclesiastical functions . . . the Afghans have never caused us the smallest inconvenience . . .",

and again, 4.3.1727 (*S.N.R.*, III, p. 544):

" . . . The Afghans leave us with our former freedom, as regards our functions. . . ."

Of Fr. Cyril of the Visitation, a Piedmontese, Vicar of Shiraz for twenty long years till his death, and of the stress suffered in that town or by the mission during the upheaval and captures of the place, first by one side then another, no account remains on record except in a letter of 8.5.1725³ which he wrote to Fr. Philip Mary at Isfahan, and that is little:

¹ If the Tabriz 'batman' this was 6½ lb. in modern times.

² O.C.D. 238 u.

³ *Idem*, 238 i.

“ . . . Your last letters received on 18.1.1725 were of the 18th November and 20th December 1724: since then nothing received. . . . I will tell you that we in particular “are in great distress, not knowing where to have recourse for some money for our ordinary “expenses, and here foodstuffs are very scarce and exceedingly dear . . . so I am obliged “to go off (if I find a convenient opportunity) to Bandar ‘Abbas to find money. . . .”

What exactly happened, and when, to the Carmelite Residence at Shiraz the documents examined do not reveal; but of the other Religious there, Fr. Antony Francis, the ‘Necrology’ of his province of Lombardy records, ambiguously:

“Having been intrepid and constant in the midst of the frightful, bloody revolutions in “the kingdom of Persia, at the age of 52, in the month of December 1728, to his great “glory and merit he remained buried beneath the ruins of his Residence. . . .”

That may refer to the walls and roofs of the Residence collapsing, and to this Religious being fatally injured; but there may be an error of date, and November–December 1729 be intended when the following events occurred according to the diary written in Gāmburun by the Agents of the East India Company:

“Wednesday, 3.12.1729. . . . Our linguist” (= munshi or interpreter) “. . . received “a letter from his wakil at Shyrash . . . that, on hearing of the Persian victory at Spahaun, “those of that nation in Shyrash attackt the Afghans and the engagement lasted from “Sunday noon, 9.11.1729, till the next day week, when the Afghans, getting the better, “cut off all the Persians, plunder’d and burnt that city and retired into the castle, and “two days afterwards on receipt of some news from Spahaun kill’d all the Bannians “(= Hindus) also. Dilawar Baig, the deputy governor, an Afghan, came to our house, “beat the linguist’s agent, threatened to murder him, kill’d two of his servants and plunder’d “the house of some sugar and tea belonging to the Chief and 400 Tumans. . . . On their “leaving the house our people and the remaining Armenians who were not murdered “retired to the hills stark naked, having been stript by the Afghans, and in the night-time “came down to the adjacent villages to get victuals. . . .

“Friday, 16.1.1730. . . . An Armenian, who was made prisoner by the Afghans in “Shiraz and ran away from there, arrived this morning and confirmed . . . the massacre “committed in that city. . . .”

But two days after occupying Isfahan ‘Tahmasp’ Quli Khan the Afshar set out with some 26,000 men after the Afghans:¹ and so the diary from Gāmburun for 16.2.1730 gives the news:

“Thomas Cooly Caun beat the Afghans near Shyrash and killed 2,000.”

Bishop Barnabas Fedeli in a letter of 6.6.1730² wrote of this Residence:

“ . . . Since the coming of the Afghans, and still more so since the return of the Persians “this mission has been totally destroyed both materially and spiritually, because there are “no more than two or three Catholics passing through, and the church, as in fact the whole “house, is in ruins, so that it can be truly said—*non remansit lapis super lapidem*—not one “stone remained standing on another: because all that is to be seen is a heap of mud “turned to dust, and it is the greatest pain to behold it. . . .”

Fr. Philip Mary’s letter of 17.11.1724 refers to the earlier part of the stay of the Afghans when he speaks of:

¹ From Fr. Leander’s *Secondo Viaggio*.

² *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 539.

"the trials of our Fathers at Shiraz who, besides having been maltreated, beaten and the 'Fr. Vicar put in prison and released only on payment of money, have been robbed of 'much, down to their clothing and tunics. . . ."

In various letters to Rome during the later part of the Afghan rule in Isfahan the good bishop appeared more preoccupied about discipline than relief of the distress: that of 8.4.1725¹ is all about the interdict he had placed on the 'chapel' of the French consul, because the latter during eight years had failed to produce the 'privileges' for it he had repeatedly alleged to hold. He prohibited, 15.4.1725, all priests from saying Mass in houses of secular persons or in the open without his special licence, under pain of suspension—a decree against which, 19.4.1725,² a vigorous protest was signed by the Carmelite vicar of Julfa, as being contrary to the Bull of Paul V and privileges granted Carmelites in Persia, and by all other superiors of the Orders in Isfahan. Bishop Fedeli explained in a letter to Rome, 2.5.1726³ (when he admitted his failure to correspond with the Sac. Congregation):

" . . . After four long years of profound silence . . . I shall begin to loosen my tongue. " . . . Among the other abuses which began to appear was that of Holy Mass being "celebrated by some missionary Fathers in houses of private people, without consulting "the bishop and without need . . ." (he cited one Carmelite Father) 'who had come from 'Bandar 'Abbas with the English Agent and, because the latter was bringing with him five 'or six French soldiers, Catholics, whom he had as "slaves" (i.e. prisoners of war), and 'would not allow them to go outside the house, the Father who was constantly in the house 'of these English took it on himself to celebrate daily there. . . . "Shortly after the "Afghans arrived and, as long as the siege lasted, other missionaries took a like liberty. . . . "When the siege had ended and the city surrendered, after the Fathers had each returned "to his House . . . the abuse seemed to me too great, particularly because there are 8 "Catholic churches open, four in Isfahan, four in Julfa. . . ."

But the Dominican bishop brings to notice also a recrudescence of Armenian malice against the Catholic Uniats. Gifted as a race with a great capacity for adaptation to circumstances—political opportunism—the Armenians rapidly contrived to gain a footing with the Afghans: as the 'merchant princes' of the capital, with credit and relations and knowledge of affairs and business, and with information outside as well as across Persia, their leading men doubtless made themselves useful, apart from providing funds.

Indeed Fr. du Cerceau's book at the end of its recension of the memoirs of Fr. Krusinski⁴ refers to a strange

"edict published in Isfahan and all over the kingdom since the Afghans conquered it, by "which the nationalities are placed in the following degrees. The first rank is assigned to "the Afghans:⁵ the second to the Armenians: the third to the Daghistanis, being Sunnis like "the Afghans, brought to the number of above 100,000 by Mir Mahmud to dwell at "Isfahan: the fourth rank to the Gabrs (Zardushtis): the sixth to the Jews: the seventh to "the Persians who are treated like slaves by the other six nations . . . it is ordered by an "edict published at Julfa that all suits arising among the Armenians shall be determined "by judges of their own nation, any Armenian appealing to any other magistrate will be "fined. . . ."

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 540.

² O.C.D. 238 u.

³ *S.N.R.*, III, p. 537.

⁴ Vol. II, p. 198.

Fr. du Cerceau's *History of the late Revolution in Persia* (1740, London) makes the curious assertion (vol. I, p. 137):

"The Afghans (Aghwans) who were originally of the province of Shirwan, which was anciently called Great Albania, "situated between the Caspian Sea and Mount Caucasus, were formerly subdued by Timur the Lame . . . in order to "keep them under the stricter subjection he placed them between Persia and the Indies. 'Tis said they were anciently "Christians, of the Armenian sect, but that they turned Muhammadans for want of the assistance and instructions of "their priests. . . ."

Bishop Fedeli, then, remarked in his letter, 4.3.1727:

“ . . . the Armenians, from being useful to these Afghans from time to time, take advantage
“of the kindness of the latter, to molest the Catholics. . . .”

and again, 17.9.1727:

“ . . . we enjoy our former liberty” (i.e. pastoral protection for worship) “over all Catholics
“there were in the time of the late king Sultan Husain: over the new (Catholics) who have
“become so in the time of the present reigning sovereign, *who is very well disposed towards*
“*the Armenians*, for the present we have no jurisdiction. It is true that the *raqam*, or royal
“order, was already prepared to cover the new Catholics also; but the hasty and precipitate
“sallying forth on campaign of the king¹ allowed no time for it to be issued. . . .”

Two months afterwards Bishop Barnabas resumed, at great length by exception:

“At last the Armenians have given vent to their passions, which they had been inwardly
“fanning. Already for some time past, by oppressing first this person, then another and
“by menaces to send them to prison . . . the (schismatic) bishop showed openly what
“was in his heart with regard to the Catholics (usually here called ‘Franks’). But I and
“the other missionary Fathers continued to affect indifference, and to put up with it;
“because we knew that there being a ‘fair wind’, on account of the special protection of
“this ruler, they might ‘launch out into the deep’ of a general persecution, and this mission
“be totally ruined. So we allowed them to go on, with marriages, baptisms, burials, etc.,
“to deprive them of any occasion whatsoever for abandoning it. In the meantime there
“came up the need for providing a priest for the church of the Sharimans, at which there
“was officiating only one neophyte, who did not afford satisfaction to the people, much
“less to the officials of that church, Catholics for long past: there were constant dissensions,
“and they became lukewarm in God’s service, and the people began to fall away. More
“than two years passed and, because of the death of the other Catholic priests, the Messrs.
“Shariman were always pressing me to ordain one, because they did not wish to become
“dependent upon the Armenian bishop, who was anxious to insinuate one of his own
“schismatics into this church: and, although I recognized the very great need. . . . I kept
“putting this off, month by month, because I wanted to wait for some reply. . . . Finally,
“as the need became more urgent and, in addition to the repeated request of the Messrs.
“Shariman there was also the advice of the missionary Fathers, I deemed it best to ordain
“a youth of proven character and sound belief. That greatly displeased the (schismatic)
“bishop and his priests, because they saw their penetration into that church barred, the
“more so by a priest who without exaggeration by his teaching proves to be a bulwark
“against all the priests in Julfa and has often confounded them” (in argument). “So,
“taking advantage of the present poverty of us missionaries, abandoned both in the matter
“of financial support and of protection (for the French consul last year was seized by an
“attack of apoplexy, which completely deprived him of speech and the use of the limbs
“on his right side, and the Dutch and English will not mix themselves up in it), they, the
“schismatics, laid an information, as they listed, in terms of gold, with a Mulla, whom
“they selected as magistrate, and before him we were then all cited, both Franks and
“Armenians. Each of us put forward his case, and produced the royal permits obtained
“from past Shahs: and, although our *raqams* were very clear, and set forth ample faculties
“for us to be able to perform all our functions and for all persons of whatsoever nationality
“to come to our churches, yet, despite all this, the arguments of the Armenians prevailed,
“and the Judge gave his sentence that in future the Armenians might not come to our

¹ Shah Ashraf the Afghan—perhaps the end of October 1726 is meant, when he marched out to defeat the Turks advancing on Hamadan.

"churches any more, nor might we teach or preach to them. Nevertheless we tried to explain better our reasons, and to enable him to recognize how unjust the claim was. But he replied that such was the king's order, so that we judged it best not to persist further.

"When that sentence had been pronounced and confirmed, your Eminences can imagine what a celebration and what jubilation the Armenians made, just as—on the contrary—what humiliation and bewilderment was ours. . . . It was brought to an end then by the Messrs. Shariman laying before the judge a more copious and more subtle statement and affidavit than that presented by the Armenians, so that he modified and explained his sentence more clearly in our favour, saying that from the date of the coming of the Afghans was meant and that all Armenians, who were Catholics before that date, were at liberty to continue to come to our churches and schools and with their entire families.

"At the news of such modification and explanation (of the sentence) the Armenians were very much dejected. It is impossible to describe adequately the knaveries committed by them in making representations both to the magistrate and also to the royal officials, in order to get the magistrate's decision annulled, but all in vain. So we remain with our freedom as of old, and jurisdiction over the former Armenian Catholics and their families, but we do not possess such faculties as far as the Catholics who have become so in the time of the Afghans, and others, non-Catholics, are concerned. However, by the grace of Jesus and the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary it is hoped that the old *ragams* and permits will be restored to vigour before long. What is needed is money—at least 150 sequins: and the Messrs. Shariman, especially the brother of Count David, who is in Leghorn, although they had already spent on it 800 sequins, are determined to spend this sum too, in order to make a perfect sacrifice to Jesus Christ. . . . If it were not for these gentlemen, our missions would already have been ruined. . . .

" . . . Under the pretext that I had usurped the jurisdiction of the (schismatic) bishop, they pretended that they had only against me the charge of having ordained the above-mentioned priest, and when we had gone before the magistrate they had us all caught in a trap. After having obtained the sentence in their favour the first thing they did was to have the two priests of the Shariman church taken to the public square of Julfa and ill-treated: the next morning they entered the Shariman church¹ to profane it with their sacrileges: and they are already trying to do the same at our churches—so that your Eminences see in what a state we were. . . ."

Finally, 6.10.1728,² Bishop Fedeli remarked:

"There is a sort of famine and the whole of this town of Julfa is on the road to ruin . . . the Armenians are beginning to feel the heavy hand of justice on them. . . ."

At Hamadan the schismatic Armenians used like tactics with the new master of the town, the Turk, as the Vicar Apostolic, Fr. Joseph Mary, shows in his letters:

"25.2.1726. Baghdad. . . . I proceeded to Hamadan as quickly as I could, recovered over 400 books for our library, but not without paying money. I put the house in good order, as far as I was able, then for the third time came here. . . . The heretics in Hamadan have already exerted themselves with the Turks to get us turned out of the town: so that three times I wrote to the French ambassador in Constantinople about this business: and, if I do not get the reply, I shall myself go to Constantinople, because there is danger in delay . . .",³

¹ *Vide* Conte David Shariman's letter from Leghorn to the Sacr. Cong., 22.3.1728 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 527):

"the persecution against our House . . . so that they had succeeded in getting hold of our church: now happily the difficulties are overcome."

² *S.N.R.*, III, *post* p. 546.

³ *Idem*, *post* p. 588.

“ . . . I came here to go to Constantinople to ask for a permit for the House at Hamadan, “without which there is imminent danger of it being lost, because the heretics have already “tried to get the Pasha to turn us out of this town: and, though they did not obtain it on “this occasion, they will certainly do so in time. . . .”

Three years later, 20.5.1729, he wrote, from Baghdad:²

“The heretics in Hamadan, as I wrote to your Eminence, tried to eject us from that “town by accusing us before the governor of being intruders in the house of the late bishop, “and alleging that it belonged to the Treasury because that bishop had died without any “heir. By Divine providence it happened that the governor did not side with them, but “confirmed that the house was ours, and declared it juridically to be ours, forbidding “anyone else to dare to molest us. A novelty among the Turks, but God is over all things!”

As a matter of fact, Monsieur d’Andresel, ambassador of France, had done what he could, on the evidence of his letter of 10 11.1725³ to the Vicar Apostolic:

“J’ay reçu, mon révérend Père, les deux lettres que vous avez pris la peine de m’écrire “de Babylone et d’Amadan le 17 et 25 mars dernier. Le tems n’est guère favorable pour “parler de commandements” (i.e. ‘farmans’) “qui regardent la Perse. Je tenteray cepen- “dant la demande de celui dont vous dites que vous avez besoin pour n’être point inquiété “dans la possession de la Maison d’Amadan, occupée autrefois par MM. les Evêques “Picquet et Pidou de St. Olon, et qui l’est actuellement par vous en qualité de Vicaire “Apostolique de Babylone. Le second commandement que vous demandez pour deffendre “que les Francs payent le caratche (خراج) dans la Perse ainsy qu’on l’a fait payer à Kar- “mancha n’est pas peu difficile à obtenir, les Turcs prétendant que les capitulations ne “font point mention de pays conquis. Je verray néanmoins ce qui pourra se faire au sujet. “Quant au troisième commandement pour permettre d’avoir une maison à Babylone, dans “laquelle on puisse faire ses prières et où les Chrétiens du pays eussent la liberté d’aller, la “demande en a esté faite par plusieurs de mes prédécesseurs, et elle a toujours esté rejetée, “aussy il ne serait pas prudent de s’exposer à un nouveau refus. Il est vrai que les Capuchins “avoient autrefois une maison dans cette ville, mais elle fut demolie par ordre de la Porte “pendant l’ambassade de M. de Fariol. . . .”

Then another change in the administration of the diocese of Baghdad is to be noted. Returning “on the road to Baghdad”, Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, 20.10.1727,⁴ addressed the Cardinal Prefect:

“Again and again I wrote to your Eminence (asking) that I may be released from office “as Vicar Apostolic for the diocese of Babylon. I had accepted it unwillingly, and because “Cardinal Sacripante said to me that it would be only temporarily. It is beyond my “strength. . . .”

In consequence, in a session of the Sacr. Congregation, 26.9.1728,⁵ the Secretary reported that:

“on account of Varlet, Bishop of Baghdad, being in Holland, a schismatic, refractory and “also excommunicated, but all the same not deprived of his diocese and, as this diocese

¹ *S.N.R.*, III, *post* p. 588.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 608.

² *Idem*, IV, p. 34.

⁵ *Acta* for 1728, p. 460, *vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5.

³ *Idem*, III, p. 595.

"is without its Vicar Apostolic, i.e. Fr. Joseph Mary of Jesus, Discalced Carmelite, who "has resigned that employment, His Holiness, therefore, has appointed as Vicar Apostolic "instead Monsignor d'Oea, a bishop *in partibus*, together with the whole revenue, except "for 100 scudi reserved for a pro-vicar to be chosen and deputed at the choice of the Sacr. "Congregation, and who is to be in charge of the administration of the diocese of Baghdad. "So, as there does not seem to be anything more appropriate than to choose as pro-vicar "a Discalced Carmelite Religious in view of the proximity of their mission to that diocese, "the General of the Order in question proposes Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, Discalced "Carmelite, a native of Burgundy, who, although young in years, is very learned and "well bred.

"Rescript. . . They decided to depute a pro-vicar in the person of Fr. Emmanuel. . ."

From the secretariat of Briefs, there had already been sent to the Sacr. Congregation, 31.7.1728,¹ an explanation

"as regards the Briefs to be issued for Monsignor the Bishop of Oea, the one as Vicar "Apostolic for the diocese of Baghdad, in accordance with the decision of His Holiness "expressed in the attached note, and the other for there to be attributed to him the income "from the Luoghi di Monti appertaining to that see, to last as long as there will be a vicar "apostolic. . . . Although the deputation of Mgr the Bishop as Vicar Apostolic seems useless "in itself, it is not so, however, in the" (attendant) "circumstances, as His Holiness wishes "a pro-Vicar Apostolic to be made. . . ."

("On 6.8.1728 a Brief had been issued by which Fr. Bernard of Jesus, Discalced Carmelite, Bishop of Oea, was instituted Vicar Apostolic of Baghdad, the obligation of "residing there being transferred to a pro-vicar. . . .")²

Thus it came about that, 29.11.1728,³ Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, of whom much will be quoted in the next chapter of this work, wrote to the Cardinal Prefect:

"Only a few days since, just as I was about to go on board the ship, I received your "Eminence's letter and so was overcome by exceeding great astonishment on seeing that "the Sacr. Congregation had deigned to set their eyes on me, and appoint me pro-Vicar- "Apostolic for Baghdad, when there are so many more worthy. . . ."

He reported to the Sacr. Congregation that he reached his place of residence, Baghdad, "towards the middle of September 1729."⁴ But before that date Fr. Joseph Mary, who, *vide* his letters of 28.3.1729 and 20.5.1729,⁵ had

"celebrated the Easter festival with solemnity⁶ . . . I had asked the governor to (be "allowed) to have here a house, and was thinking of soon blessing it . . .",

received a letter from Fr. Emmanuel from the frontier of Palestine, and so, 10.9.1729, quitted Baghdad. But receiving *en route* earnest requests from his successor to remain supervising the Christians until the new pro-vicar had learnt the language and something of the country, he allowed himself to be persuaded to turn back to Baghdad.⁷

That was across the border in Mesopotamia. But at Julfa the closing years of the Afghan tenure of sovereignty saw the Catholic Missions with their bishop in almost desperate straits. He wrote, 17.9.1729:⁸

¹ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 10.

³ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 28.

⁶ At that date, 1728, there were two churches in use at Baghdad, one Nestorian, the other Armenian. See Fr. Joseph Mary, 6.12.1728 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 56).

⁷ *Vide* letters of Fr. Joseph Mary, 6.7.1729 and 12.7.1729 (*S.N.R.*, III, pp. 533-5), and 10.12.1729 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 52).

⁸ *S.N.R.*, III, *post* p. 546.

² *Vide Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 5, p. 287.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 546.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 34.

“The roads being ever tighter closed and the risks ever greater through the proximity of two enemy armies on the borders of Hamadan. . . . If the (Afghan) king makes war, “it will certainly be very bloody and savage, and there is no appearance of peace. Mean- while we are passing through the greatest calamity and suffering. . . .”

He continued:

“6.II.1727.¹ From the year 1719 up to today no money has been sent to me, and from “the year 1721 till today, it appears, no letter has been sent to me, nor at least has any “reply reached me: so that without money, without replies and without any counsel or “directions, how can this mission exist?”

and again, 17.II.1727:²

“ . . . As to my personal condition, I am without money, replies, or any letter from “the Sacr. Congregation for many years now, and more recently without any reputation “in the eyes of the Messrs. Shariman, who have received a letter from their brother stating “that the letter of exchange has not been completely honoured . . . that I should live “and die poor will be to the glory of the habit I wear, but that I should die with debts “contracted so obligatorily will be a great dishonour to the office with which I am charged,”

and, 6.I0.1728:³

“ . . . The money remitted by the Sacr. Congregation not yet having reached me . . . “I have been at last obliged to draw a new bill of exchange for 300 scudi on M. Jacques “Rousseau, a merchant of Geneva. . . . For *seven* years now I have received no replies “from the Sacr. Congregation . . .”,

and still, 6.5.1730:⁴

“it is now more than 7 years since I received any letter from the Sacr. Congregation, save “a duplicate of exchange. . . .”

In that pass the page has to be turned, only to expose to inspection a chapter of history still more tragic for the Carmelite and other missions, still more stained and broken and confused for Persia.

★

★

★

★

★

¹, ² and ³ *S.N.R.*, III, *post* p. 546.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 668, p. 580.

REIGNS OF SHAH TAHMASP II (SAFAWI) 1729-1732

'ABBAS III (SAFAWI) 1732-1736

an infant under the control of

NADIR SHAH (AFSHAR) 1736-1747

ALTHOUGH THE archives of the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide contain a quantity of material covering this period of eighteen years in Persia and Mesopotamia, it is deficient in sustained narratives and historical data about the rapidly changing political situation on the one hand, and on the other hand in information regarding the activities of the Catholic Religious: it is no easy task to piece together the story of those years in either domain from those records and a consecutive story will not be forthcoming: from the Carmelites only some sixty letters and reports have been traced in the present search, but twenty of them (and most of these singularly uninformative) written by Religious working inside Persia—the rest come from pens of missionaries across the border in Mesopotamia. Among the latter was one laudable exception, who showed by his remarks his sense of duty in this respect, the pro-Vicar Apostolic (afterwards Bishop) of Baghdad, Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, c.g. on 15.1.1749:¹

“During the past three years, since I arrived back in this diocese, I can assure your Eminence that I have never let pass a favourable opportunity without writing in detail “everything fresh that had occurred, both in this country and in Persia, and both what “concerned the spread of the Catholic Faith and also regarding the revolutions in Persia; “but, as I have only received three letters from your Eminence, one of 29th July the two “others of 8.1.1748, this makes me think that many of mine have been lost by reason of “the corsairs. . . .”

He, however, was away from Baghdad for 12½ years out of the eighteen now under review (even if three of those twelve were passed in Aleppo), so that his opportunities for regular reports were limited. Partly for the reason that he was so punctual with the intelligence he gave, partly too because of the compensation it provides for a lack of news about their posts in Persia, this chapter will include a certain amount of matter communicated by Mgr Emmanuel and his Carmelite missionaries regarding the initial struggles and adversities of the present Carmelite mission in Baghdad, and their pioneer efforts in other parts of Mesopotamia as far as Diarbakr; for, whereas the Residence at Basra till 1770 and later was an integral part of the Persian Mission, the missionaries at Baghdad and elsewhere in Mesopotamia were from the first independent of the control of the Vicar Provincial of Persia, and were ‘companions’ and assistants of the Bishop, or Vicar Apostolic.

There are other salient features about these eighteen years calling for an introductory query. If the missionaries in Persia of the five Orders (not the Carmelites alone) were negligent in reporting (or, to put the more favourable complexion on it, admitting that the number of their letters which safely reached Rome was fewer than in the past), on the other hand the failure for years together to ensure that endowment funds and allowances from Rome reached them and the bishops in Persia and Baghdad, the failure to send recruits to keep alive the convents and Residences, so that gradually the old men of 55 and 65 years of age died off and buildings remained untenanted and dropped to pieces, is all an enigma for the student—did the Sacr. Congregation and the five Orders represented come to the conclusion that these missions were wasted effort, that the material in men might better be used elsewhere—was there a complete desiccation of vocations and eagerness for the mission-field in the East in

¹ S.N.R., V, p. 266.

addition to preoccupation of the Orders with affairs in Europe—why, when at the end of some 50 years the Catholic missions in Persia had now an established, recognized position, was it that abandoned from Rome? For, paradoxically, while there was this apparent indifference in Rome and Europe, by 1745 Catholicism at Julfa had reached numbers not known since the early Church, not attained to-day—several thousands, whether 5,000 as Bishop Emmanuel asserted, or more—even though the remarkable spectacle, almost unbelievable for the European resident in modern Iran, of two Catholic archbishops and two Catholic bishops, three of them Europeans, being simultaneously in 1699 in the country, was not again seen. With all the political upheaval round them, the missionaries indeed reached the peak of their work.

As a preliminary to discussion of the period under review the changing sovereignties and the campaigns will be illustrated by extracts from letters and reports in these archives, supplemented by references in the hitherto unpublished diaries of the (English) East India Company's agent at Gāmburūn in order to make the position for the Christians clearer to the student. Those letters and reports from the sources cited are often contradictory, or bear no resemblance to one another.

According to the narrative in Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia's *Secondo Viaggio*, after the entry of the hereditary prince Tahmasp and his energetic generalissimo into Isfahan in December and November 1729 respectively and the immediate pursuit of the Afghans to Shiraz and the southern littoral by the latter, Shah Tahmasp in April 1730¹ with a large force of Persians set out to lay siege to Tabriz. The Turks evacuated it and retired on Erivan, the commander of which place turned on the Persians and so beat them in a six-hour battle that the Persians are said to have had 11,000 killed, apart from those wounded and many men drowned in the river Araxes.

Fr. du Cerceau's *History of the late Revolutions* (1740), after mentioning that the memoirs of Mr. J. T. Krusinski, S.J., go no farther than the end of 1725, added an appendix of events till 1739, but gave the warning:

'as to what has passed from the end of 1725 to the present time . . . I could have no information but from the publick "News-Papers, wherein things are represented in a very "imperfect and uncertain light . . ."' and he cited various examples of the "little dependence that is to be placed upon those originals with regard to the certainty of facts . . ."

After that frank disclaimer Fr. du Cerceau's work under the year 1730 notes:

"After this the Sophy Tahmasp besieged Tabriz and, receiving intelligence that a great body of Turks were on their march to relieve it, he posted himself in an advantageous place, and attacked them with so much bravery that *he obtained a complete victory . . .*",

and is therefore at variance with Fr. Leander's account quoted above.

¹ These accounts may be compared and checked with the East India Company's Factors at Gāmburūn in their diaries:

"30.4.1730. . . . (We) received a letter from the Resident, Mr. Geikie in Spahaun . . . that the king is greatly displeased at Thomas Caun's demand for him to go to Qazwin with all his family. . . . This demand of the Caun with his marrying the king's sister without his Majesty's consent, and his keeping to his own use all the money he has forced from the inhabitants. . . ."

"5.7.1730. This day by a French shotter (*shatir*) received a letter from our gentlemen in Spahaun acquainting us of the tyrannical proceedings of the Persian generall, who not only suffer'd his soldiers to plunder and ravish wherever they went, but to sell whole families of the poorer sort as slaves, that the soldiers were so insolent as even to act their villainies before the king's gate, that the generall had gone to such lengths that 'twas thought he could not retreat, tho' 'twas said, if he sett up for himself, the military would not obey him. . . ."

"3.8.1731. Isfahan also advise us that a peace is concluded with the Muscovites, who have surrendered all Gilan back to the Persians, reserving only Darband and Baku, which Shaw Thomas has given them . . . that Thomas Caun "straightly besieges Hyerat" (Herat). . . ."

"Sunday, 12.9.1731. Isfahan advise us, the king was marching towards Hamadoon, in order to meet Achmat Bashaw, who advanced towards their frontier with a numerous army. . . ."

"Thursday, 8.12.1731. Basra . . . also advise us of the defeat of Shah Tahmasp by Ahmad Pasha. . . ."

"23.3.1732. Peace made with the Turks. . . ."

"Wednesday, 19.4.1732. 'Thomas Caun' (i.e. the future Nadir Shah) "having taken Harat, was returned to Mash-had. . . ."

Fr. Leander's book goes on, as regards 1731, to record that having re-formed a force of 90,000 men, Shah Tahmasp again set out to take Erivan; but at *Qazwin* changed his mind and turned towards Sanneh (in Kurdistan), whence he attempted to drive *Ahmad Pasha from Hamadan*; *he lost the battle and had to make inglorious terms with the Turks*, letting them keep Hamadan, and proclaiming an armistice.

Fr. du Cerceau's appendix, on the other hand, has:

"In 1731 the Sophi, whose army was augmented to 140,000 men, laid siege to Erivan "and receiving intelligence that 50,000 Turks . . . were advanced within 20 leagues of "that place in order to raise the siege, he left sufficient number of troops to continue it, "and marched with the rest to meet the Ottoman army, which he attacked with such "vigour that . . . the Turks . . . were obliged to retire . . . with the loss of above "16,000 men killed on the spot, besides 20 pieces of cannon taken and all their baggage. "The battle lasted till night . . . the Persians took but 2,000 prisoners. After this action "Shah Thomas, having rejoined his army before Erivan, summoned the governor to sur- "render. . . . But about this time a bloody battle was fought between the Turks and "Persians near Hamadan, in which a great number of men fell on both sides, and *the Turks* "remained masters of the field. This determined Shah Tahmasp to sue for peace, and in the "meanwhile he proposed a cessation of arms, which being readily granted public rejoicings "were made . . . for three days successively at Constantinople, and the Persian am- "bassador, who had been kept in prison there for several months, was set at liberty."

By this treaty the Turks did surrender part of their conquests as far as the Araxes, but reserved for themselves the fairest portion of the Persian border provinces. Fr. du Cerceau then quoted an account forwarded from the Court in Moscow to their minister in London:

'Some time before this treaty was in the making Tahmasp Quli Khan, generalissimo of 'all the forces in Persia, with great authority and power over the Shah and people, had 'been obliged to march with part of the Persian troops to . . . quell a rebellion of the 'people of Kandahar and Herat . . . he at first met with great resistance from the rebels, 'though afterwards he obliged them to submit, and having totally defeated them got at 'last possession of the famous city of Herat and, having established new governors both in 'that and other centres, he left it last spring in order to return to Isfahan. It was on his 'way home that he received the news that a peace was concluded between the Ottoman 'Porte and his master and, being further informed upon what conditions . . . he very 'much resented it and without giving notice to the Shah . . . he immediately published 'a manifesto in which he assumed the title of Wala Ni'amat (Lieutenant of the Kingdom) 'and declared that the treaty lately concluded with the Turks was very detrimental to 'the Persian state by giving up to the enemy the best of their provinces . . . "for that 'reason I, Tahmasp Quli Khan, am going in person with a numerous army against 'our enemies the Turks, in order to regain the provinces . . . and to procure for the 'Persian prisoners their liberty. . . ."

' . . . Tahmasp Quli Khan with 30,000 men arrived on 15.8.1732 (old style) at Isfahan 'and encamped . . . in one of the Shah's gardens: three days after his arrival he waited 'on the Shah (who received him coldly) and on returning to his encampment put many 'of the Shah's domestics under arrest. On 21.8.1732¹ the Shah went in person out of the

¹ The East India Company's diary from Gāmburn differs to the extent of one day on these historical events:

" . . . Sunday, 7.9.1732. A 'shotter' (*shatir*) from Spahan by way of Carmania (Kürman) with a letter dated 28th "August, advising that on 22.8.1732 Thomas Caun invited the king to his tent where, after entertaining him very sump- "tuously, he seized him and put him close prisoner, and the next morning he ordered the drums to beat, when he pro- "claimed as king Shah 'Abbas the Third a child of his Majesty about three months old, under the pretence that his "father had forfeited the throne by his lazy, indolent management, and his being a sot . . . and, 25.8.1732, he sent the "king away to Mashhad under a strong guard: that he had appointed new governors to most of the provinces. . . . "3.8.1732 . . . reported that Thomas Caun would set out in 20 days for Baghdat. . . ."

city to meet Tahmasp Quli Khan, who received his Majesty at the head of his commanding officers with all the respect due to his royal person and having conducted him to his tent desired his Majesty to sit down. . . . The Shah asked the General: "What reason he had "to put his domestics under arrest?" to which Tahmasp Quli Khan replied haughtily: "Because your Majesty has no need of such persons who are only kept in laziness . . ." The Shah, being very much offended, got up to go home; but the General stopped him . . . and with that conducted him to the adjoining house, where he kept him all the night.

The next day, being 22.8.1732, the General went into his tent and assembled all the officers of his army and, being seated, made the following declaration to them: "That "the Shah was altogether unfit to govern the kingdom and had by his evil conduct brought "infamy upon their country and . . . lost a great number of Persians . . . that hitherto "they had been obliged to bear all this, for want of a successor to the Crown; but now "since the Shah has a son three months old, named 'Abbas, I think it proper to settle the "Crown upon him . . . his father I think it expedient to keep from this time under a "strong guard, allowing him during life a sufficient maintenance. . . ." Upon this there was for a while great silence among the officers; but at last some of them having approved the declaration, the General gave orders to bring him the egret's plume (a sign of sovereignty) from the Shah's head. The General then sent for the Shah's wife and the prince her son, who were both publicly conducted before the army, the mother being covered, to the tent . . . a little time after the prince her son was sent back to her with the turban and royal plume on his head. Then the General ordered a new coin to be struck and new seals to be made bearing the young king's name Shah 'Abbas. . . . All the old ministers and other persons . . . of the deposed king's party were put under arrest and banished to the province of Khurasan, whither the dethroned Shah was sent, 25.8.1732, under a guard of 1,500 men.

On 26.8.1732 Tahmasp Quli Khan was married to a sister of Shah Sultan Husain, the widow of Mirza Daudan [*? sic*] . . . On 28.8.1732 Tahmasp Quli Khan entered with all his army into the city of Isfahan and took up his lodgings in the royal palace: the same day he ordered to be set up in the Chihil Situn a magnificent cradle, in which the infant king was laid, and at the side of the cradle were put the turban, the royal plume and a sabre. Then Tahmasp Quli Khan assembled the Mullas and Sayyids and went to prayers in the presence of all the officers of the army, after which they congratulated the Shah upon his accession to the throne. . . .

. . . General Leveshol, who was at that time with part of the Russian army in the province of Gilan, had in the same month of August pursuant to articles of peace concluded between Russia and Shah Tahmasp surrendered that province . . . after which he went and encamped in the province of Shirwan, which formerly belonged to the Persians, but which is now given up to the Russian Empire by the late treaty, and appointed his headquarters in the city of Darband, where he received an express from Tahmasp Quli Khan with a written account of the deposition of Shah Tahmasp and the elevation to the throne of his son, Shah 'Abbas, in which Tahmasp Quli Khan assured the Russian general that he will keep . . . the conditions stipulated in the treaties lately concluded. . . .

Having thus settled matters . . . Quli Khan marched with all speed to lay siege to Baghdad, before the Turks could assemble their army to relieve it. . . .

From Julfa correspondence of the Catholic Religious affords the following commentary on the text of Fr. du Cerceau as quoted above:

"On 7.12.1729 . . . there entered in triumph into the City" (i.e. Isfahan) "king "Tahmasp, son of the late Shah Husain . . ." ¹

¹ Bishop Fedeli, O.P., 15.2.1730, *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 537.

In May 1730 the Bishop of Isfahan travelled via Shiraz because

“the more direct and convenient route from Hamadan to Baghdad was closed by the “invasion of the Ottomans, who came to protect Hamadan, which the Persians threatened “to besiege . . .”¹

between that and 22.9.1730, when he again wrote from Shiraz:²

“some time ago the rumour was spread that the Persians were going to besiege Basra, and “many vessels were already being got ready on the sea-coast. . . .”

Then from Baghdad, 1.10.1731,³ Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert informed the Cardinal Prefect that

“a courier arrived today from Persia with the news of the entire destruction of the Persian “army, 3,000 having been killed on the field of battle, as further of the capture of Hamadan “by the Turks. Thus for a third time the poor mission at Hamadan is ruined. . . .”

Fr. Urban of S. Eliseus, from Isfahan, in the course of a letter dated 13.6.1733⁴ observed:

“ . . . In September last year Tahmasp Khan, general of the Persian army, and the “second person in the kingdom, imprisoned his own king and sent him off to the province “of Khurasan, putting him in a fortress: and he caused to be proclaimed Shah a child of “that king, aged three to four months. Then he left Isfahan to lay siege to Baghdad: and “this siege has been now going on for some months, and he will take it very easily if the “Grand Turk does not relieve it with his army. . . .”⁵

*Chron. Basra*⁶ is explicit as to the date of the beginning of the first siege:

“7.1.1733. . . . On that same day Tahmasp Quli Khan, general of the Persian army, “began to besiege Baghdad from the Persian side. . . . In the month of February” (1733) “with the assistance of the chief of the Bani Lam Arabs he brought his army across the “river, and the Persians had fighting with the Turks, with whom were some Arabs and “Ibn Man’a; but the Turks fled, so Tahmasp Quli Khan with his army was master of that “side of Baghdad: and therefore the siege grew more severe. After some days part of the “Persian army proceeded and took Hillah together with a huge stock of wheat and “barley. . . .”

Fr. Leander’s account in the *Secondo Viaggio* mentions that the Afshar general marched on Hamadan with 100,000 men. Ahmad Pasha retired on Baghdad, and was followed by Tahmasp Quli Khan, who blockaded Baghdad,⁷ not permitting victuals to enter; but when he had already got a footing in a part of the city, he received news that his own cousin Ab-bashi [? sic] Khan, whom he had put as governor of Shiraz, had marched on Isfahan, with the intention of freeing Shah Tahmasp. So the Afshar strategist concluded an armistice with Ahmad Pasha, the governor of Baghdad, one condition being that two large cannon buried

¹ Bishop Fedeli, O.P., 6 6.1730, *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 539.

² *Idem*, pp. 2, 548.

³ The East India Company’s diary from Gāmburūn gives under:

“December 1732. The Caun’s affairs at present are in a declining condition, the Lur and Hawaizeh Arabs having “rebelled and got together great numbers of troops, which has obliged Tahmasp Quli Khan to call the greater part of “his forces from the frontier: . . . and Ahmad Bashaw” (i.e. the Pasha at Baghdad) “now bids him defiance. . . .”

⁶ Folio 440 of original MSS.

⁷ The diary from Gāmburūn gives under March 1733:

“Advices from Spahan of 20.2.1733: little or no trade and money very scarce. By the last news from the camp Thomas “Caun had approached very near to Baghdad, tho’ with great loss of men.”

² *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 542.

⁴ O.C.D. 242 h.

in the desert, too large to move, were handed over to him. Then he raised the siege and marched to suppress the movement of his cousin.

Fr. Leander's *Secondo Viaggio* goes on to relate that, after putting Shah Tahmasp in closer confinement, the Afshar general returned to the attack of Baghdad, which Topal 'Uthman Pasha with 200,000 men had been sent by the Sultan to relieve: that the Turks inflicted a defeat on Tahmasp Quli Khan and the Persians at the Diala river, where the latter lost 16,000 men,¹ and withdrew to Hamadan pursued by the Turks. In 27 days, however, Tahmasp Quli Khan had already collected a fresh force and for the third time marched on Baghdad.

Chron. Basra, in confirming that defeat, permits the victory of Topal 'Uthman Pasha to be dated approximately July 12th 1733:

"An Agha arrived from Baghdad, 16.8.1733, with a 'farman' from Ahmad Pasha of Baghdad (who also at that time held the governorship of Basra): so the 'farman' was publicly read out, and in it was stated that Topal 'Uthman Pasha, general of the Turkish army, after some hours of sanguinary combat had defeated the army of the Persians with its general Tahmasp Quli Khan; and those who remained (alive) took to flight along with Tahmasp Quli Khan in the direction of Kirmanshah, and the Turks took many Persian guns with other things, and many prisoners. So the gates of the city of Baghdad were opened, and it was liberated from the siege by Tahmasp Quli Khan, 17.7.1733. There was accordingly great rejoicing in Basra, the receipt of the news being hailed again and again by the cannon, not only of the town but also of all the European ships which were lying at anchor in the great river: and a new Mutasallim arrived, 18.8.(1733), sent by Ahmad Pasha for the governorship of Basra with another 'farman' confirming the first, and once again there was rejoicing, and the cannon proclaimed the victory over the Persians. The sufferings at Baghdad during the time of the siege cannot be realized. One mān (maund) of wheat reached 200 piastres and was not to be found: they ate all the mules, camels, asses and horses—only two horses remained for Ahmad Pasha—dogs, and cats, mice and similar unclean beasts, and they also ate skins out of hunger, and others even said that some infants had been devoured. Ahmad Pasha had whatever gold and silver there was in his treasury coined into money, and distributed to the soldiers, lest they should by force open the gates of the city to the Persians, by reason of the straits and hunger they were suffering. When the victory had been won, therefore, in a short while wheat began to be sold at a better price, as also other victuals. . . ."

Fr. du Cerceau's *History of the Revolutions in Persia*, on the other hand, makes the fighting between Tahmasp Quli Khan and Topal 'Uthman Pasha take place in 1733 before the suppression of the revolt in Fars (that does not bear out the statement in a letter of Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, 12.7.1733, written from Sidon (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 274), "dispatches freshly received from Baghdad by the Consul" (of France) "speak of the Persians having made themselves 'masters of Mausil')—

"The year 1733 . . . it was near the middle of the summer . . . before the Turks could bring together an army upon the frontiers of Persia sufficient to oppose those of Quli Khan. At last . . . a great body of forces under Topal 'Uthman . . . approached Baghdad, in order to raise the siege. On 19.7.(1733) they came to an engagement, in which the Ottomans seem to have gained some advantage."

This is doubtless the same as the "signal defeat" communicated from Isfahan to the East

¹ East India Company's diary, Gāmburūn:

"16.10.1733. Two 'shooters' from Spahan—advices dated 8.9.1733, giving news that Thomas Caun had received a 'signal defeat from Topal Osman Bashaw, so that his affairs seem in a very declining condition: he had gathered his scattered troops, which with recruits are now said to be about 25,000 men. . . . Shaw Thomas" (i.e. Shah Tahmasp II) "is at Mizzendroon" (Mazandaran) "brought thither by a body of 300 Khurasanis and very strictly guarded. . . ."

India Company on 8.9.1733, as mentioned in the footnotes, and confirmed not only by *Chron. Basra* as quoted just above but also in a letter of the Carmelite Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert dated Aleppo, 29.9.1733:¹

" . . . With my companion I shall leave here . . . when the roads are opened because, 'notwithstanding the victory which the Turks had over the Persians about *three months ago* 'at six hours' distance from Baghdad, no caravan has yet dared to take the risk, which 'leads me to think that that victory was not so complete as the Turks have proclaimed. 'It is further said that the Persians have returned very near Baghdad, while it is only a 'few days away from the Ottoman army and it is not doubted but that there will shortly 'be a second action. . . ."

In that prognostic the pro-Vicar Apostolic was correct, for Fr. du Cerceau's account continued:

" . . . The effect of this action was the raising for the present of the blockade of Baghdad. 'The governor of the place, Ahmad Pasha, reduced to the last extremity for want of provisions, sallied out upon the few' (i.e. Persian) 'troops left in the trenches, put them to 'the sword and carried the provisions of the Persian camp in to his garrison.

'The Persian general, being joined by a fresh body of 40,000 men, returned towards 'Baghdad: and on 22.10.(1733) there was said to have occurred a fresh encounter—that 'was the news spread in Constantinople. Actually, it appears that Tahmasp Quli Khan 'laid an ambush in a pass near Kirkuk (is this the battle of the Diala mentioned by Fr. 'Leander?), the main body of Turks pursuing some 12,000 Persians, who had feigned flight, 'into the pass was hemmed in, and in a sanguinary battle near Kirkuk (?) 50,000 Turks 'were killed, including the commander-in-chief and nine Pashas, while the Persians lost '30,000 killed and wounded. Quli Khan himself was said to have had five horses killed 'under him and to have been wounded in both arms. After the battle Quli Khan returned 'to the blockade of Baghdad, not having it in his power to make a regular siege for want 'of heavy artillery . . . he remained master in the field . . . tho' he himself was forced 'soon after the battle of Kirkuk to return to Isfahan and to march thence into the province 'of Shiraz, in order to reduce a rebellious Khan,² which he did in a few days after his 'arrival. . . . He made an offer of peace to the Porte on terms which were said to be not 'unreasonable . . . they were not relished by the Turks who . . . prepared to renew the 'war with the utmost vigour in order to extort from him conditions yet more favourable 'to themselves. Their obstinacy did them no service: for on 28.2.1734 Quli Khan's army 'entirely defeated 45,000 Turks who came to relieve Baghdad: 20,000 were killed on the 'spot and the rest got into the city which remained close blockaded. This action cost the 'Persians 10,000 men. . . .'³

¹ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 278.

² Compare the East India Company's diaries from Gāmburūn:

"October 1733. Attacks and raids all round by *Baluchis*, etc.

"January 1734. Thomas Caun has made peace with the Turks, and thereupon marched directly from Baghdad in quest of Mahmud Khan *Baluch*, whom he met and defeated in a place called Bahboon" [*? sic, Bihbihan*].

It is, however, somewhat difficult to reconcile the dates—Fr. du Cerceau's 22.10.1733 for an engagement with the Turks near Baghdad followed by the battle with Topal 'Uthman Pasha—with a pursuit by Tahmasp Quli Khan of a rebellious chief in southern Persia over by or before January 1734, and yet by 28.2.1734 Tahmasp Quli Khan was back and had defeated another Turkish army marching to relieve Baghdad. It is true that Fr. Leander asserts that after Tahmasp Quli Khan's first reverse and retirement on Hamadan "in 27 days he had already collected a fresh force, and for the third time "was marching on Baghdad. . . ."

³ Baghdad continued to be invested at least loosely, and communications cut until February 1734 at least, for another letter from Fr. Emmanuel, dated Aleppo, 5.3.1734 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 299) noted:

"I have had the honour to write various letters to your Eminence giving you information about all the warfare in "Persia. . . . Having penetrated as far as Urfa . . . I was obliged to come back to Aleppo . . . the latest news from "Baghdad is that the city is still, as before, besieged by the Persians. The Turks have caused a great quantity of troops "to be sent over to relieve it, which has up till now made traffic impracticable; for two years past trade and caravans "have in fact been interrupted. But it is hoped that before long the great caravan from Basra will arrive here by the "desert route. . . ."

In this connection Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert gives the information:¹

"By two other letters received from our (Carmelite) Fathers at Shiraz and Isfahan we learn that the reason why Tahmasp Quli Khan has not made himself master of Baghdad is because, at the time when the city was reduced to extremities, he heard that a fresh rebel with 40,000 men was making great havoc in the heart of the country; so that he was obliged to make a diversion to go and fight him. He reached him and subdued him.² The general passed by Shiraz, a town abounding with exquisite wine and, although it was the time of Ramazan,³ i.e. of their fasting, he gave permission to all his army to drink it and, as they numbered 90,000 men, they emptied all the canteens in a very few days. Our (Carmelite) House was not spared the insolence of the soldiers, because it was partly sacked and our Fathers very badly handled. The Persian general, seeing himself triumphing over all his enemies, returned to the Baghdad front; but with a very large gift" (of money) "the Pasha of that city was able to obtain peace. . . . The peace in question is of small credit to the Turks, because it obliged them to restore all the districts they had seized from the Persians in the last wars. Another sign that peace is assured is the arrival of the great caravan from Basra" (i.e. at Aleppo) "which for three years past had not come: it finally arrived last Friday to the number of 1,200 and more camels, loaded with all sorts of riches from India. . . ."

That expedition to Southern Persia to crush the revolt would have been in February or March 1734, presumably.

After this bloody campaign, having failed to capture and occupy Baghdad city, Tahmasp Quli Khan made on 9.4.1734 one of his rare appearances in the capital. In a letter written from Aleppo by the Carmelite Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, already quoted, occurs the statement:

". . . A merchant in Baghdad writes to me on 20.5.1734 that the city is in such good trim as it never was—that Tahmasp Quli Khan, the Persian general, has retired with his army to Isfahan⁴ whence he will return with the Sophy" (i.e. the Shah) "to Kirman-shah in order to sign there the treaty of peace with the Turkish general 'Abdullah Kupruli, who is on the way to that town: that the Persians and Turks are already on perfectly good terms and a few days previously two caravans had arrived from Persia at Baghdad, and similarly many merchants of Baghdad had left for Persia. . . ."

Though he does not put a date, or year, to it, perhaps it is to the early part of 1734 that may be assigned the following incident about the future Nadir Shah related by Fr. Leander in his *Secondo Viaggio* (but not, speaking under correction, in any other history of this period):

'His own eldest son' (whom the Carmelite Father calls "Mirza Khan") 'when governor of Hamadan, had had pulled down a house belonging to a poor citizen, in order to widen the Maidan, where he played games on horseback' (? polo=*chaugan-bazi*), 'this being

¹ Letter of 1734, undated, but presumably of June or later, from Aleppo, *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 359.

² Whether Fr. Leander's revolt of the governor of Shiraz, cousin to Tahmasp Quli Khan, was the same movement of Mahmud Khan Baluch' which the general had suppressed by January 1734, or another, is not clear. But the latter is evidently the subject of Fr. Emmanuel's account of the halt in Shiraz, and evidently dates the expedition to Fars in late 1733-early 1734.

³ Ramazan 1145 A.H.=16th February to 18th March A.D. 1733; Ramazan 1146 A.H.=5th February to 7th March A.D. 1734.

⁴ Confirmation exists in the diaries from Gāmburūn, which give the date:

"Dutch *shatrs* from Spahaun, dated 28.4.1734, advised that Thomas Caun on 9.4.1734 was returned to Spahaun, the streets being covered at his entry in the same manner as for the kings, and the illuminations and fireworks lasted for some days. . . ." And again (15.8.1734), "Thomas Caun left Spahaun, 3.6.(1734). The Turks have brought numerous forces into the field . . ."

Curiously enough, Fr. Leander's book quoted alludes to 12,000 Tumans being spent to embellish the Chahar-bagh—the great avenue of Isfahan—with flowers (!!) on an occasion when the autocrat remained 2 months in Isfahan—perhaps these months, 9.4.1734 to 3.6.1734.

'done without Tahmasp Quli Khan's consent. When the general returned from his last 'attack on Baghdad, on the owner of the house making complaint to him personally, 'Tahmasp Quli Khan had his own son strangled on the spot in dispute. After the execution' (perhaps done inefficiently, on purpose) 'the son showed signs of life and was revived: the 'news was taken to Tahmasp Quli Khan, who again gave orders for his son to be killed.'

This story was told by the Carmelite Religious in connection with the terrible justice meted out by the tyrant, so that, as Fr. Leander experienced on his own journeys, all along the roads anyone could travel without fear of robbers, for Tahmasp Quli Khan made the head of each village responsible for any complaint of incidents in his boundaries.

After leaving Isfahan for the north in June 1734 Tahmasp Quli Khan appears to have first turned his attention to the eastern side of the Caucasian provinces, which had fallen into Russian occupation during the previous years of anarchy and inroads by the Turks to the west, and to have forced the Russians to retire from Shirwan by September of that year (as indicated by a Gāmburun diary):¹

Then he had turned west to deal with the Turks and, before April 1735, laid siege to Ganjeh,² which was at last taken.³

Fr. du Cerceau's *History of the Revolutions, etc.*, makes a brief mention of "another action 'between Tabriz and Erivan which also ended in favour of the Persians and in the death of " 'Abdullah Kupruli". A letter of Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, from Baghdad, 9.9.1735,⁴ permits that battle to be dated about 1.8.1735:

"Our Fathers at Isfahan write too that they are enjoying at present great tranquillity 'because Tahmasp Quli Khan, the Persian general, being constantly victorious over the "Turks, the country, especially the capital, is being set on its feet again day by day. About "forty days ago there was a great battle near Erivan, in which the Turks were totally defeated "and more than 20,000 men, together with the commander-in-chief" (i.e. 'Abdullah Kupruli) "and six other Pashas, were left dead on the field of battle. This great rout will "oblige the Turks to make peace with Tahmasp. . . ."

In fact, from Fr. Leander's book it is learnt that, although the

'Sultan of Turkey had a force of 116,000 men assembled, and put under Ahmad Pasha 'of Edessa, peace was made near Erzerum on the following terms:

- '(a) Tabriz and its district, seized by the Turks during the Afghan hostilities, was 'to be Persian,
- '(b) the boundaries between the two empires were to be as in the time of Shah 'Sultan Husain,
- '(c) the Turks were to give back all Persian prisoners.'

Fr. du Cerceau adds that provision was also made for the Shiah Persians to visit on pilgrimage Makkeh and Madineh free of the impositions till then exacted.

Readers will marvel how, with the continual carnage of those previous ten years of civil wars and campaigns on the frontiers and the drain on the manhood of the country—no matter how great a reduction for exaggeration be allowed in the figures of those said to be slain—a tribal leader, risen from the ranks like Tahmasp Quli Khan, was able constantly to replenish his armies and keep them drilled and equipped, above all obedient and content to serve. One

¹ e.g. "8.10.1734. Rejoyceings have been made for Thomas Caun takeing Shirwan, who was then at Shamakha, where "he had raised in ten days 50,000 Tumans and as many horses. He demands of the Muscovites three years' revenue "of the country they are possessed of, and that they evacuate all these places. . . ."

² A letter from the linguist, or interpreter, of the East India Company at Isfahan, received 15.4.1735, had it that "Thomas Caun has raised the siege of Ganjeh to go out to meet the Turks, who were approaching with very numerous "forces."

³ Then, in another communication: "19.4.1735. "Ganjeh at last taken."

⁴ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 370.

reason at least was that the soldiery were well paid. According to Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia's book a soldier was paid one Tuman=5 Venetian sequins monthly. (A Carmelite Residence to maintain and two Fathers to feed and clothe was allotted an allowance of only 12½ Tumans yearly.) To provide that large regular army budget in addition to expenses on campaign required a substantial revenue and, for all that Fr. du Cerceau's quotation from the Russian report to London alleged that after deposing Tahmasp II 'when the General went into the 'Shah's palace he found a treasure of many millions which had been hoarded by Shah 'Abbas I', Tahmasp Quli Khan, even before he mounted the throne, began to extort money wherever he could find it.

Early the official European companies found his methods drastic and despotic:

"Wednesday, 20.5.1730. On instructions from Bombay the Agents at Gāmburun advised "their Resident in Isfahan to withdraw their Factory and make the best of their way to the "coast, should representations to the Persians prove ineffectual."

From the diaries of the English East India Company at Gāmburun there is the evidence. On 28.8.1732 the Resident from Isfahan had written that

"Thomas Caun had forced from him 300 Tumans, as he had also from the Dutch."

In December 1732 large exactions from the Dutch and English companies at Isfahan are mentioned:

"November 1734. We have already taken the step recommended to us of withdrawing, "if possible, from Isfahan.

"22.10.1734. The Resident, Mr. Geikie, wrote that he had sent away Mr. Pack with "all the Company's books and papers. . . . The Sarkar Thomas Baig had arrived in the "city bringing a *raqam* for the East India Company and for the Dutch, which was an "order to supply Thomas Baig with what number of ships he might want, well armed and "provisioned, to go any errand he should please. Refusal would mean Thomas Caun's "displeasure.

"Tuesday, 28.1.1735. 'Shotters' from Isfahan from the Resident, dated Julpha, 7.1.1735. "He is removing from the Hon'ble Company's house in the city. The governor of the city "at first a little impeded him, but on a visit to him and the Resident giving him assurances "that he would not leave Julpha and set out for Gāmburun till we heard from Thomas "Caun . . . acquainting him our antient privileges were now refused by him, and that "we had been insulted and oppressed. The Hon'ble Company were resolved on leaving "their Residence in Spahaun. The Resident is apprehensive that, as Thomas Caun desires "to hold a General Majlis at Qazwin,¹ he may be ordered thither. . . . As to public "affairs the Resident seemed to think they carry a very bad aspect and little prospects of "tranquillity being restored and trade flourishing."

The Dutch East India Company at Gāmburun at that time had 150 Europeans (i.e. soldiers as well as employees) in their Factory, but they were equally suspicious with the English, who

"Wednesday, 3.9.1735, went on board ships (having already sent their soldiers away) "resolved to evacuate Gāmburun. . . ."

Those diaries also reported, under

"Wednesday, 21.5.1735, *Basra* news: Latiff Caun with his fleet had entered the river" (i.e. the Shatt-ul-'Arab estuary). "The Arabs" (i.e. from Hawaizeh) "joined him . . .",

¹ The 'sitting together', or assembly, in Arabic: commonly used in Persian of any meeting, and, specially, of the National Assembly.

and to this abortive enterprise of the Persians both the Carmelites Fr. Leander and Fr. Emmanuel make interesting references. In his book *Secondo Viaggio*¹ the former speaks of the Agent-in-chief of the English Company at Basra, Mr. French:

"The English consul, named Mr. French, had been asked by Ahmad Pasha" (i.e. the governor of Baghdad) "to defend that city" (i.e. in 1735 when Latif Khan and the Persian-Arabs attacked it), "just as at the time of the first siege of Baghdad" (i.e. 1733) "he, the Pasha, had begged him to allow him a ship to take away his—the Pasha's—womenfolk "to Bengal: and the consul not only at once granted him the vessel, but also made an offer "of his own person to take charge of it and be their escort, should that office be pleasing "to his lordship. . . ." (Now in 1735 Tahmasp Quli Khan had sent a 'body of men to 'assist the Arabs, his allies, under the Khan of Hawaizeh in seizing Basra; but this Persian 'force was repulsed by three English ships, which were waiting in the Shatt-ul-'Arab to 'return to India after the monsoon'.)

"By these two acts of courtesy he (Mr. French) so gained the liking and the esteem of "that potentate that, in addition to paying him great respect, twice he invited him to "come from Basra to Baghdad, and the first time made him a present of the value of 20 "purses (of money), the second time of 30 and more purses, together with the dagger all "studded with precious stones that the Pasha himself wore. . . .

"To this consul we (the Carmelites) owe a large part of our House at Baghdad, as it "was enlarged with 800 piastres which he gave to Fr. Emmanuel, my companion, as an "alms-offering. I shall say further to his eternal praise that no missionary ever passed by "Basra to whom he did not give an appropriate alms. . . ."

Thus qualified Mr. French proved to be a tower of strength for the struggling Catholic community. Writing to the Cardinal Prefect in Rome, 9.9.1735,² the pro-Vicar Apostolic mentioned that:

"Basra has lately been besieged by the Persians and Arabs, but some European vessels "anchored there put them to flight, but for which they would have made themselves masters "of the town . . .",

and, 8.3.1736:³

"the English consul from Basra⁴ has come to Baghdad on business: he is my particular "friend—of all the missionaries in fact—and his recommendation to the Pasha and the "notables contributes greatly to the triumph of the Catholic Faith in this fine mission, "because this consul is that one who saved Basra some months ago from invasions by the "Arabs and Persians: so that his recommendation has had all the effect I could desire. . . ."

On 3.10.1736⁵ the Carmelite pro-Vicar Apostolic wrote once more from Baghdad:

¹ p. 172.

² *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 390.

³ *Idem*, p. 375.

⁴ Mr. Peter French had been 'Resident' for the East India Company at Basra, at least from 1729 (*vide Chron. Basra*, folio 432 of original MSS.). "He was an Irishman born of Catholic parents, but lived with the rest of the English after the English fashion" (i.e. not practising that religion). When the epidemic—*malignus influxus*—towards November 1737 began to rage in Basra and

"many of the merchants especially the Europeans fled to the hamlets outside the town, among them was Mr. French, "the English Resident, who, when the epidemic at last ceased, returned to the town and fell into a fever, and when that "became serious, Fr. Placid sent him Fr. Cyril, but the English would not admit him in the sick man's bedroom, perhaps "suspecting the Father's intention: so that to our great grief the sick man died miserably without the Sacraments. "God grant that he will not lose eternal reward . . . He treated our Fathers with singular kindness and, when he "obtained an opportunity, showed this by many signs of beneficence. . . . Fr. Placid, Vicar Provincial in 1730, when "an Armenian of Julfa named Agapiet died here leaving by his will 2,000 isolotas for our missionaries of Persia . . . "deposited the sum on interest with the said Mr. French. . . ." (*Vide Cont. Basra Chron.*)

⁵ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 421.



NADIR SHAH, THE AFSHAR

A miniature in the Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum
[By permission of the Trustees]

"... It is said that peace has been made between him" (Tahmasp Quli Khan) "and the Turks, but there is no appearance of it: and three days ago I received a letter from the English consul at Basra, who writes that the Persians have once more closed the Gulf¹ with many vessels in order to prevent any provisions from entering Basra . . .":

id not only to the Shatt-ul-'Arab was Tahmasp Quli Khan sending forces intent on extending the Persian dominions and, more still, on obtaining new sources for taxation and extracting wealth to maintain his military power; e.g. in April 1737 the Gāmburun diary of the East India Company recorded:

'Persian forces on the coast of 'Uman. The Persian fleet sailed for Khur Fakkan, 1.4.1736 (?), to land about 3,000 men and 2,500 horses to aid the Imam to quieten his rebellious subjects. . . .'

To return to follow Tahmasp Quli Khan, last noted as having taken Ganjeh in the Caucasus early in 1735. It is to be presumed that he remained in that area—for he captured Erivan—until by the commencement of 1736 the infant Shah 'Abbas III had perished ('poisoned', Fr. Vander's narrative appears to imply) or, if alive, could be ignored: and the moment arrived when the ambitious general could hold that 'Grand Majlis', foretold by the English 'Resident', when (on the plains of Mughan, according to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*) he found the moment propitious, or it suited his book to be saluted as Shah-in-Shah of Iran by the might of his sword, and be crowned, 26.2.1736, the inaugural ceremony taking place at Qazwin:

"Monday, 15.3.1736. A 'chapper' (i.e. *chapar*=postal courier) arrived today and "brings the advices that Thomas Caun by his own management had prevailed with the "Grand Assembly to desire he would take upon himself the title of king, which he graciously "accepted, and has appointed Mirza Taqi, when he created a Caun and Baiglarbaigi of "Fars. Wrote a letter to Shaw Nadir congratulating him on his accession to the throne. . . ."

as how the English Factory at Gāmburun recorded the event.²

Then in September 1736 he went on a campaign against the Lur tribes of the south-west, attacking and killing a chief of the Bakhtiari, according to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Perhaps first the tribesmen had cut up some of his troops or offered a resistance, which at first appeared successful—as is often the case—for from Baghdad, 3.10.1736,³ wrote Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, already emphasizing the tyranny and foretelling its outcome:

"As to the wars in Persia, I do not think they are at an end. Tahmasp Quli Khan has "had himself declared king" (Shah), "sword in hand, but it is not believed that it will be "for long, his tyrannical rule rendering him detested by all the people. . . . The said "Tahmasp with his army has been beaten twice recently near Hamadan by the Bakhtiari, "who are certain rebels from the mountains, and do not want to recognize him: it is said "that peace has been made between him and the Turks, but there is no appearance of it. . . ."

But, however things had gone at first, he quickly crushed that revolt, for the Gāmburun diary merely mentions:

¹ By 'Gulf' presumably the estuary of the Shatt-ul-Arab meant.

² The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed., quotes, without citing contemporary evidence, that, when offered the crown, a new monarch, who adopted the title Nadir Shah, stipulated as conditions that the crown should be hereditary in his family and measures taken to bring the Shia Muslims of Persia to accept uniformity of worship [² *sic*, for 'tenets'] with Sunnis, and the Mulla-bashi [² *sic*, for 'Chief Mujtahid'] objecting the new Shah ordered him to be strangled, a sentence executed on the spot

³ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 421.

"19.10.1736, confirmation of the king's victory over the Lurs (he) having taken prisoner 'their 'king', Shah 'Ali [? sic], whom he had killed in a most barbarous manner. His 'Majesty is now in Spahan preparing for his expedition to *Kandahar and India* . . .",¹

and again

"28.11.1736. Latest advices from Shaw Nadir are that he was sett out of Spahan, and "was to be entertained with his whole army at Deh Girdu."

Perhaps that was only the preliminary moving out from the city into camp, for the Carmelite Fr. Leander puts the actual start of the expedition four months later, writing that on 3.6.1737

'Nadir Shah moved off the force he had been preparing for months past, and fitting out (having posts put at wells in the Lut desert) against Kandahar, where he had heard the 'Afghan Shahs had hid much booty taken from Isfahan and other towns. His investment 'of Kandahar began at the end of August 1737. For sixteen months it was ineffective and 'he was delayed over the obstinate defence, as the Afghans made constant sorties.'

Rapidly to trace the course of this Asiatic war-lord in the next few years without going into the details of his deeds in India, which are recounted in several histories, it will be sufficient to note that after marching with a force, said to have numbered 80,000, through Khurasan and Sistan to the siege of Kandahar, Nadir Shah (according to Fr. Leander's *Secondo Viaggio*) finally gained a foothold in that strong position

'by a trick, proposing the exchange of hostages and from his own camp sending into the 'town his cousin Lutf 'Ali with instructions to go slowly and seize and hold on to a point. 'Then, having prepared in advance a position outside and fired off a cannon, he had cut 'off the heads of the Kandahari hostages already in his hands, assaulted the town and utterly 'destroyed the old city.'

On its capitulation late in 1738 he occupied his forces first in dealing with Central Asian principalities. While his son Riza Quli crossed the Oxus river, defeated the Uzbaks and caused Balkh to surrender, Nadir Shah pursued the fugitive Kandaharis through Ghazni to Qabul (garrisoned from Delhi at that period) which was carried by storm towards the end of the year.

According to Fr. Leander's narrative it was before he launched himself into India that

'Nadir Shah sent orders to his son, Riza Quli, governor of Khurasan, who had Shah 'Tahmasp II Safawi in ward, to kill the prisoner and make his death known in such manner 'that the population of the country in general would accept it as a fact that the Safawi 'dynasty was extinct. The prince, his son, promptly had all the women of the 'andarun' 'of Shah Tahmasp killed, and the children in it, and, lastly, Shah Tahmasp II strangled.

'Then Nadir Shah turned on the dominions of the Mogul Emperor of Delhi, who at 'that time was warring with the Mahrattas, advancing through Gandumak to Pishawar, 'crossing the Attock and the Jhelum rivers to Lahore, which soon surrendered, and finally 'he defeated the Mogul emperor Muhammad at Karnal north of Delhi in February 1739.'

Fr. Leander's account in *Secondo Viaggio* differs substantially from others here: briefly he makes the emperor invite Nadir Shah to a banquet, and then the Persian autocrat gave in his tents a return feast, in the midst of which a large part of the Persian force aided by traitors made a *coup de main*, and seized and secured the gates of Delhi, whereupon Nadir Shah arrested

¹ From which it is clear that the descent on to the plains of India was no afterthought of his operations round Kandahar, but deliberately schemed several years in advance.

the emperor, obliged him to agree to pay an annual tribute of an enormous amount, despoiled him of his treasure (which was loaded on 100 elephants) and, taking the emperor's daughter¹ for his son's bride, departed rapidly towards the Ganges, after releasing the emperor and before the Moguls could collect their forces.

His booty was immense: and, after a stay of 58 days only in Delhi, he set out on the return march to Persia, 5.5.1739, proceeding by Lahore and Peshawar to Qabul. In his pride he could style himself 'Shah-in-Shah'—'king of kings'. On the return march he sent his brother, Ibrahim, against the Uzbaks in revolt, but Ibrahim was killed. In 1740 he was at Harat on the present Afghan-Persian frontier; and from Harat he moved on the Central Asian principalities of Bukhara and Khwarazm, whence according to the abstract in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Nadir Shah proceeded to Mashhad, which he made his chief residence, and where he spent some months in festivities. Fr. Leander's narrative has it that in 1740 he went into winter quarters in Mazandaran:

"By the grace of God, after so many years of war in Persia we are beginning to breathe
"a little, with some hope of tranquillity,"

wrote Fr. Thomas of Aquinas, then Carmelite vicar of Julfa on 25.4.1741,² after congratulating the Cardinal Prefect on the election of Pope Benedict XIV, whom he had known at the time the new pope had been created cardinal:

"Wala Na'amat, the monarch, who usurped the kingdom, has already returned victorious
"from India laden with the spoils taken from the enemy and with treasures of immense
"value, having with his shrewd might there subjugated that empire to his proud, upstart
"Persian throne. . . ."

It is perhaps during that winter of 1740, but more probably after April 1741 and before the summer of 1742, that occurred the strange incident told by Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia's book in these words:

"The Shah-in-Shah at that time was staying in Mazandaran, while he had built in
"Khurasan the city and fort of Mashhad, so celebrated in Persia. One day, when he had
"gone for a ride with his women, as he passed near a thicket, a shot from an arquebuse
"was fired at him, but instead struck his horse in the breast. Immediately a second missile
"was discharged and he was struck by it in the left hand and the thumb of it was shot
"away. He fainted from the pain and fright, and fell from his horse, or rather, I should
"say, he fell together with the horse which had been wounded by the first shot. The ladies
"at once rushed to his assistance and, when he came to himself and his wound had been
"bandaged, he was taken back with all his following to his tents and there treated for his
"wound. He and his officials made many investigations in order to discover the criminal
"responsible for this attempt on his life; but, instead of discovering who that was, some
"days after he was recovered he found underneath the tablecloth a note on which there
"was written: 'In vain thou searchest for those who discharged their guns against thee:
"learn that the sons of Hasan-Husain are twelve: two of them have attempted to take
"thy life without success; but there remain another ten of them, who have to try and hit
"the mark.' The Shah-in-Shah turned pale and trembled on reading those words: his
"spirit was filled with such fear that he no longer knew in whom he could trust. Desiring,
"however, to know who had been the guilty person, he promised large sums of money to
"whoever might disclose it and he added that, should the criminal denounce himself, on
"his oath as Shah not only would he receive the sum specified but his life as well. Not

¹ The Capuchin Fr. Damian from Lyons, physician for several years to Nadir Shah and others of his family, wrote distinctly that it was Riza Quli Mirza who was married to the Indian princess, not Nasrullah as some historians have it.

² *S.R.*, vol. 708, p. 399.

"long passed after the proclamation when a soldier of his guard presented himself before "Nadir Shah and had the courage to say that he had fired the shots against him. . . . "The Shah-in-Shah questioned him whether he had been moved by hatred to do the act, "or by the suggestion or command of other persons. The soldier answered that he had "been ordered to do it by Lutf 'Ali, cousin of Nadir Shah, and by the commander of his "guard, who was none other than his own son, to whom he had married the daughter of "the Mogul emperor. He then gave orders that they should be at once brought before "him: and he was obeyed, as they had not had the time to get away from the hands of the "soldiers, who for the most part were faithful to the Shah. When all the criminals had "been brought to his presence and reproached for their felony, he ordered that the sum "promised to the soldier should be paid: and then, protesting that, although he had sworn "to spare the lives of the guilty parties, he had not done so to leave them unpunished, he "ordered that on the instant their eyes should be put out with the point of a knife, and as "an act of grace sent off the soldier on a visit to the Shrine of 'Ali, a great prophet of the "Persians" (i.e. at Najaf in Mesopotamia, or 'Iraq as it is now known, the great place of pilgrimage for Shiah Muslims in addition to Karbala.) "I myself a year afterwards conversed on several occasions with that soldier and from his mouth in Baghdad heard all "this related.

"On account of this incident the honour of alone furnishing the guard for the king, their "fellow-provincial, was taken away from the Khurasanis; even though they had numbered "as many as ten thousand in it, all of them were removed, and in their stead the honour "was given to as many schismatic Armenian Christians to whom he promised the freedom "of practising their religion and at the charge of the royal treasury always maintained "their priests in comfort and dignity, and desired that their religious observances should "be strictly observed."

Confirmation of this incident comes from another Latin missionary source. In 1738 the Capuchin Fr. Damian from Lyons was sent to their mission at Tabriz, and¹ soon impressed to act as physician to Nadir Shah and his cousin 'Ali Quli, until in 1746 the Jesuit Lay Brother Brazin replaced him. From Aleppo, 5.3.1743,² Mgr Emmanuel of S. Albert forwarded to the Cardinal Prefect copies of two letters "written from the camp of the king of Persia, "received here a short while ago", headed 'copy of a letter from Fr. Damian of Lyons, 'Capuchin, written to their Fr. Custodian at Aleppo': the second dated Tiflis 22.10.1742 contains the news:

"The Shah has had plucked out the eyes of his son, Riza Quli Mirza, *that is the son who "had a shot from a gun fired at his father . . .*",

so that the punishment can hardly have followed immediately on discovery of the identity of those implicated.

An important point emerges from that letter—already by November 1742 Nadir Shah, with his megalomania on the one hand and a gluttony for shedding blood and gloating over men's bodily torments, was unsound in mind, "suffering from fits of melancholia". The letters merit transcription in the original French:

(From the army of the king of Persia in the mountains in the Caucasus near Darband.)
 "21.9.1742. Il y a environ six mois, que j'étois sur le point de partir pour me rendre à "Diarbekir selon l'ordre de Vostre Révérence, le Roy de Perse me fit venir en poste à "Derbent, pour avoir soin de M. le Résident de Russie, qui estoit dangereusement malade "d'une scorbutie qui l'avoit ietté dans une atrophie si grande qu'il en est mort. Affinque "que le Roy ne fût pas mécontent de moi ic luy fis promptement une représentation que

¹ Vide Fr. C. da Terzorio, *Missioni dei Minori Cappuccini*, vol. III, Rome, 1920.

² *S.N.R.*, V, p. 74.

“ce Monsieur ne pouvoit pas relever de cette maladie. Il m'ordonnat d'en avoir soin
“jusqu'à sa mort; après quoy il me fit appeller et m'interrogeat d'où i'estois et pour quoy
“ie me trouvois dans ce pais. Après luy avoir fait connoître ma patrie, et nos operations
“il m'a retenu auprès de luy.

“Ce roy estoit incommodé d'une intempérie chaude du foye et des viscères. Je luy
“prescrivis un régime de vie raffraichissant en luy disant les petits remèdes necessaires.
“Il a prit ces remèdes en sorte que, grâce à Dieu, il est parfaitement guéri. Il m'a fait un
“présent de 1,000 écus et m'a promis qu'à son retour à Derbent il me renverrât à mon
“poste à Tauris. . . .

“ . . . Le Roy a entièrement subiugé tous les peuples des Monts Caucase autre Daguistan:
“il a perdu plus de *deux cent mille* (200,000 !!! *sic*) hommes dans ces monts, mais il est
“vainqueur et doit s'en retourner triomphant dans dix iours. Il règle à présent le reste
“de son armée; et ses troupes qu'il emmène avec luy de ces montagnes doivent estre au
“nombre de 50,000. Le Roy a l'intention de se rendre à Tauris ou à Hispahan pour y
“hiverner: tous les iours il dépêche ses troupes et leur donne la liberté d'aller dans leur
“pais iusqu'au mois de Mars. Quand à moy ie conte dans peu de me rendre à Tauris.
“Le Roy au mois de Mars tournerat ses armes sur Bagdat, ie vous avertis.

“Les princes—'Ali Kouli Kan, Hibraim Khan, et le fils du roy, Nazar 'Ali Mirza¹ me
“favorisent beaucoup. . . .”

The second letter from Fr. Damian is dated from Tiflis, 22.11.1742:²

“Le Roy m'a retenu auprès de luy et, grâce à Dieu ie l'ay guéri des *vapeurs et humeurs*
“*melancholiques*, dont il estoit attaqué: ce Roy m'a très bien gratifie et depuis 20 iours il m'a
“permit de me retirer pour faire mes prières et executer les commandements dont il m'a
“honore, et au printemps s'il a besoin de moy il me rappellerat auprès de luy. J'ay l'ordre
“de me tenir prêt à Tauris. Je conte de rester” (à Tiflis) “encor dix iours, apres quoy ie
“me rendrai à Tauris selon un nouveau commandement qui vient de m'arriver pour me
“tenir pret, parce que le Roy et le prince 'Ali Kouli Kan me doivent appeller auprès d'eux.
“Les princes 'Ali Kouli Kan, Hibraim Kan aiment fort les sciences de géographie et astro-
“logie. Ils m'ont obligé de leur faire tenir des cartes géographiques, des lunettes d'approches,
“une sphère circuillaire [*? sic*] des microscopes telescopes et instruments curieux, sur tout
“pour l'approximation des étoiles. J'ai écrit à Constantinople pour que ces choses me
“soient envoyé au plus tôt. . . .

“Le Roy reste à Derbent iusqu'au printemps” (i.e. 1743): “il règle les affaires des Lesques:
“il les a presque soumis: il *doit* tourner ses armes vers les Turcs. . . .”

It is definite, then, that about March 1742 Nadir Shah was at Darband not far from Baku on the Caspian, and in the Caucasus above that place till November 1742, occupied in subjugating the Lesghians or Tatars (as commonly termed—*vide* Mgr Emmanuel's letter of 26.1.1743):

“as regards Shah Nadir king of Persia it is said that he has made peace with the Lesghians,
“or Tatars,”—

and had crushed other Caucasian races as well, though at an appalling toll of life—over 200,000 men.

* * * * *

* * * *

¹ Some historians write 'Nasrullah': Fr. Damian was on the spot and knew the prince.

² *S.N.R.*, V, p. 76.

By now the reader will have obtained a view, however incomplete in outline, of the forces that dominated Persia in the period of these reigns, and also of the main political events, fixed as accurately as the data allow: those forces had a cramping effect on the activities of the Catholic missions, and it is convenient to break off here and resume the review of affairs of the diocese of Isfahan.

In May 1730, in despair at his seeming abandonment financially and otherwise Bishop Barnabas Fedeli, O.P., decided to make his way back to Rome. He gave canonical justification:¹

"As the term of the oath taken by me at my consecration, to betake myself *ad limina* 'after ten years, has already expired, I am living in some tremors of conscience';² but I 'have delayed, flattering myself that possibly the Pontifical Briefs for Fr. Archangelus, O.P.' (who had been nominated archbishop of Nakhchiwan) 'might arrive, so that I might be 'able to consecrate him at once and send him off promptly to his see, already for so many 'years without a shepherd. . . ."

His next letter was written from the Carmelite Residence at Shiraz, 6.6.1730,³ and explained

"It was subsequently learnt from Nakhchiwan that the Pontifical Bulls had been lost⁴ 'and from Constantinople that Fr. Thaddeus, the Jesuit' (Krusinski) 'to whom it was 'supposed that an authentic copy of the Bulls had been handed according to custom, had 'gone off to Poland on his own business—so that it was, if not impossible, at least very 'difficult to hope that I should be able to consecrate him' (Fr. Archangelus), except after 'a long time. I decided to comply with my oath and take advantage of the consul for 'France leaving for Aleppo. So I accompanied him, taking the road by Shiraz to Basra, 'inasmuch as the more direct and more convenient route from Hamadan to Baghdad was 'closed by the invasion of the Ottomans. . . . So we arrived here, at Shiraz, 25.5.1730, 'after 19 days' travelling no less disastrous than uncomfortable because of the baking rays 'of the sun, which greatly sapped our strength. I in truth willingly took this route, because 'of the desire I had to visit this mission formerly so renowned, but totally ruined since 'the coming of the Afghans, and much more since the return of the Persians, both materially 'and spiritually. . . .

"... Although my wish was to continue the journey with Monsieur the consul⁵ as far 'as Basra, none the less my sufferings from Isfahan as far as here in the middle of May

¹ Bishop Fedeli, O.P., 6.5.1730, *S.R.*, vol. 668, p. 580.

² It is surprising that he and other bishops of Persian sees were not aware of their being able to obtain exemption from the obligation of making that ten-yearly visit, e.g. in the case of Archbishop Paul Baptist, O.P., of Nakhchiwan, when he mentioned to the Sac. Cong. his intention of making it, the reply was sent 4.5.1699 (*S.N.R.*, III, p. 255):

"As regards your lordship coming *ad limina*, there is no necessity that you should put yourself to the inconvenience 'of so lengthy and expensive a journey, seeing that by virtue of the Indult already granted by the Sovereign Pontiffs 'to bishops of this Sac. Congregation, who are in infidel countries, you can satisfy this obligation also by means of a 'procurator residing in this city (Rome) and appointed by you for that purpose. . . ."

Similarly, when Bishop Fedeli's successor, Bishop Philip Mary wrote of his intention to fulfil the obligation of his oath, he 'received a letter from the Sac. Congregation (bidding him) remain in Persia' (15.12.1749, *S.R.*, vol. 747, p. 89). '... I am once again in Isfahan' (ready) 'to betake myself to the Holy See in Rome, in accordance with my oath 'taken at my consecration. . . .' (28.4.1746, *S.N.R.*, V, p. 167). ³ *S.N.R.*, p. 529.

⁴ With them was stolen or destroyed also, perhaps, the Brief addressed by Pope Innocent XIII to Shah Sultan Husain, 2.3.1722 (Arch. Vat. *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 95, p. 130—see text in Latin appendix—recommending Mgr Ferri and the Catholics.

⁵ This was M. de Gardanne (*vide Chron. Basra*, folio 435 of original) who accompanied by his brother, a captain, and by Lay Brother Ferdinand of S. Teresa, reached Basra, 4.8.1730, stayed in the Carmelite Residence, and left for Baghdad, 29.9.1730. Presumably he had remained at Isfahan and in Persia since his arrival in 1718 already related. There were two French consuls in Persia, in 1722 at least, if not later, for Bishop Barnabas' letter, 10.1.1722 (*S.N.R.*, III, p. 518), without naming either stated:

"there (has) come to the capital the French consul at Shiraz. . . . nor are there any relations between the two consuls, 'and the one upsets the business of the other. . . ."

In his letter of 17.11.1727 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 546) he mentioned.

"last year the French consul was seized with an attack of apoplexy, which completely deprived him of the use of his 'speech and his members on the right side. . . ."

If that were M. de Gardanne he must have recovered to make such a journey.

"have made me realize that they would be much greater in the months of June and July
"in Basra, a climate far hotter than this: so in order not to expose myself to the evident
"risk of a severe illness, perhaps fatal in view of my great debility . . . I thought it better
"to stop here for two or three months, during which I should be comforting Fr. Cyril"
(the Carmelite Vicar) "and ease him in his lamentable misfortunes, because of which he
"is much worn out and wasted. . . ."

A further letter of 22.9.1730¹ spoke of his having received the welcome news—at last, after he had left Isfahan—from the Sacr. Congregation of scudi 1,839 being remitted to him on account of the eleven years' stipend to his credit. Then he mentioned

"before my departure . . ." (from Isfahan) "I arranged to ensure the welfare of the
"mission by appointing as my Vicar General Fr. Archangelus Ferri, already Archbishop-
"elect of Nakhchiwan, but altogether loth to go there, as he had two or three times affirmed
"to me verbally and in writing that he has twice sent his resignation: and, because the
"Father was having difficulty over the mission in the heart of Julfa on account of the
"Armenian church being rather hard to control, in order to satisfy him I have thought it
"well to appoint as my vicar there Fr. Philip Mary, the Carmelite, a Religious of really
"tried virtue and also doctrine, who for many years past is labouring there to the approval
"of all the people, especially of all the Shariman households who are very fond of him and
"can help him a good deal, should any fresh persecution arise. . . ."²

But that was the last communication from Bishop Barnabas: and on 4.8.1731 Fr. Archangelus O.P., wrote from Julfa to the Cardinal Prefect:

"In ink mingled with tears I give your Eminence the inauspicious news of the death of
"our Mgr Barnabas Fedeli, which occurred at Shiraz, 8.1.1731, at 5 o'clock in the morning,
"when he had been fortified with all the Holy Sacraments. . . . In the month of October
"he fell ill" (it is the season for fevers in that town). "In his illness Fr. Cyril, Vicar of the
"Residence of the Carmelite Fathers, gave him every attention possible; but, he himself
"falling ill, and Mgr Barnabas, being separated from him and in another house deprived
"of the charitable nursing of the Father, so rapidly lost ground that, however much was
"done later to minister to him, it was without avail and in the end he gave up his soul to
"the Creator. With all the solemnity possible Fr. Cyril performed his obsequies and buried
"the bishop in his church, which he has again restored. . . ."

That was how one bishop of Isfahan, the only Dominican in the succession, came to lie at Shiraz in a grave the whereabouts of which, like those of the church, are now quite unknown. Through twelve years of great privations and in the midst of sanguinary struggles the patrician from Milan had stood his ground valiantly—a longer period in Persia after his consecration than any of his predecessors or successors in the see.³

When the Sacr. Congregation met in the General Session of 12.11.1731⁴ to consider, *inter alia*, the announcement by Fr. Archangelus Ferri, O.P., through his brother, the Prior of Sta Sabina in Rome, notably of the death of Bishop Barnabas Fedeli, but also of his own

¹ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 542.

² There is confirmation of this in a letter of Fr. Philip Mary himself, Julfa, 7.5.1731 (*S.R.*, vol. 672):

"Last year, on 7.5.(1730) there quitted Julfa Mgr Barnabas Fedeli, O.P. . . . who had left as his Vicar General Fr. Archangelus Ferri, of the same Order. . . . The latter accepted the office on condition that he should be spared the "administration of the people of Julfa, where in addition to our Residence there is a Catholic church of the Armenian "rite, dedicated to the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, and maintained by the Messrs. Shariman with much zeal, "from which much good is derived. . . . Mgr Barnabas laid on me independent charge of this church, and also of the "whole populace of Julfa, with the title of 'Episcopal Vicar', for which he sent me the patents from Shiraz. . . ."

³ His financial difficulties in not receiving his stipend regularly fell on his family after his death, when his bill of exchange presented by the Swiss merchant, Rousseau, was not met; and the Bishop's nephew, Count Gianantonio, appealed to the Sacr. Congregation (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 550, 24.4.1732, and also 9.3.1735).

⁴ *Acta* for 1731, p. 512.

resignation on the plea that his advanced age was against his undertaking the journey to Constantinople or India for consecration, they were faced with the need for filling both sees simultaneously. Consultations over, when they met again in session, 28.1.1732, of three proposals the Cardinals voted for Fr. Dominic Maria Salvini, O.P., then Vicar General in Constantinople to be proposed to the Pope as Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, and for the diocese of Isfahan the Secretary reported that:

"leaving aside the Dominican Religious, I think there can be considered the following
 "two Discalced Carmelites, the more so as at other times this diocese has been ruled by
 "prelates of that Order, viz.: Fr. Philip Mary of S. Augustine of the province of Lombardy,
 "aged about 43 years, missionary in the town of Julfa, the population of which is largely
 "Armenian. . . . This Religious at present fills there the office of episcopal vicar, ap-
 "pointed as such by the late Mgr Fedeli: and the Father Procurator General of the Order
 "gives information in every way favourable about him . . ." (and Fr. Placid of S. Nicolas).
 "And orders were issued: 'For the see of Isfahan Fr. Philip Mary of S. Augustine.'
 "'In an audience with His Holiness, 31.1.1732, His Holiness approved.' . . ."¹

The Bull of Pope Clement XII was dated from S. Mary Major, 3rd Ides = 11.8.1732, and is eight and a half pages in length, followed in the archives by the formula of oath, two pages.²

Very humbly the new prelate acknowledged, 22.10.1733, receipt of the news four months previously.³

"I am altogether confounded by your Eminence's letter of last year. . . . My small
 "capacity and less virtue has been the reason for my not having replied earlier to your
 "Eminence, so that I might commend myself to God in a matter of such great importance,
 "as I reflect on my unfitness to take upon me a charge so far above my lowliness. But,
 "considering to obey the Lord meets with His Divine grace, I humbly kiss the feet of His
 "Holiness and the hem of the sacred purple of your Eminence and all your Eminences
 "and with all resignation submit myself to what our holy Mother Church lays on me as
 "her son. . . ."

His letter from Baghdad, 29.9.1736,⁴ tells how in order to be consecrated:

"I arrived in Aleppo, 29.11.(1735) last year, after a journey of 41 days across the desert:
 "and it behoved me to remain there nine months, awaiting the arrival from Constantinople
 "of Mgr Dominic Maria Salvini, Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, who in fact reached Aleppo,
 "9.6.1736. Already from Aleppo after I had received consecration from Mgr Dominic M.
 "Salvini . . . which was on 23.6.1736, I informed your Eminence of it and sent you a
 "copy of the oath and profession of Faith, together with the other formalities requested.
 ". . . After my departure from Aleppo, which was on 30.6.1736, I arrived in Baghdad,
 "29.8.1736, and seven days later there came from Persia Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert,
 "pro-Vicar Apostolic of this diocese. . . . I shall shortly leave for Basra in order to proceed
 "thence to Persia. . . ."

A survey of Catholic activities in the diocese of Isfahan reveals that about this time and later there were the following other Carmelites in the Persian mission.

At Isfahan and Julfa, Fr. *Urban of S. Elisaeus*, who again became Vicar Provincial in 1738 and was in Persia until he reached Basra, 26.6.1739: once more entering Persia by way of Hawaizeh in the province of Khuzistan, 3.3.1741, and confirmed by the Praepositus General of the Order as Vicar Provincial, 20.12.1743, he seems to have remained at Isfahan until in 1744 he went to Bushire via or from Shiraz. Fr. *Thomas Aquinas of S. Francis* (or S. Francis Xavier), who originally had arrived out in the Persian mission in 1729, and been posted to

¹ *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, p. 249.

² *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 560 and p. 575.

³ *Idem*, p. 566.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 419.

Julfa in August 1730 (but returned to Basra in April 1731) considerably before August 1740 had become Vicar of Julfa—perhaps after the raising to the episcopate of Fr. Philip Mary in 1736—and was there apparently till his death in 1744. Fr. John Baptist of S. Elias, who first appeared named in the Residence at Basra in May 1738, had been sent after some months by the Vicar Provincial to Julfa, there remained until some time in 1741, when he again left for Shiraz, having failed to learn Armenian and been given permission to return to Europe.¹ Fr. Dominic of S. Romuald had wished to transfer from Basra to Isfahan in order to be near his relative Bishop Philip Mary; and when permission was refused by his Vicar Provincial he chose to return to his province in Europe.² But Fr. Cornelius of S. Joseph, who joined the mission at Basra in March 1739, “was called into Persia” by the Vicar Provincial in 1742,³ and presumably there remained till his return to Basra as ‘Visitor’ before November 1746. Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret set out from Italy for Basra in November 1741, and had become Superior at Julfa before May 1745.

It may be deduced that by the time of Nadir Shah the Catholic community in Julfa had increased considerably in numbers for on 8.3.1736 Fr. Emmanuel wrote from Baghdad: “the ‘missions in Persia are all tranquil, thank God, and making progress’, and in his letter, 29.5.1745,⁴ Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret stated:

“Now will be the time to make a substantial church here in Julfa, in which the numbers ‘of the people who, thanks to God, grow from day to day, may be able to find room more ‘comfortably: that (church) we have being not a little too cramped . . .”,

while, according to the Latin report submitted in Rome by Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, 1740:⁵

“the city of Isfahan . . . allows only Muhammadans as inhabitants except for a few ‘households of European merchants and missionaries . . . whose ministry, as far as the ‘Muslims is concerned, is limited to baptizing children in peril of death. Julfa . . . has ‘only Armenian inhabitants to the number of 15,000 or 20,000: and up to one-third of them ‘have embraced the Catholic Faith. . . .”

As to the Carmelite Residence at Shiraz, restored to some extent at least after the death there of Bishop Fedeli in 1731, very little has been noticed in the archives during the present search.

“On 28.8.1732 Fr. Joseph Dominic of S. Rose⁶ first went to Isfahan . . . afterwards ‘I sent him to Shiraz to be a companion to Fr. Cyril of the Visitation, Vicar of that ‘Residence. . . .”⁷

Fr. Cyril himself, after nearly twenty years’ continuous service as vicar of Shiraz, had been to Bandar ‘Abbas, no doubt in quest of alms from the European merchants, and on leaving to return to Shiraz died on the journey after 10.4.1736. “Only seven or eight families of the ‘Armenian rite are to be counted in Shiraz, but many traders pass through it,” mentioned Fr. Emmanuel in his report written in Rome, 1740.⁸ Under 1738, *Cont. Basra Chron.* makes the bare mention, without explaining the circumstances:

¹ *Vide Cont. Basra Chron.*, folio 30.

² *Idem*, folio 7.

³ *Idem*, p. 37.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 729.

⁵ and ⁸ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 577.

⁶ He had arrived at Basra from Baghdad, 22.6.1732, bringing a Brief from Pope Clement XII to the Shah (Tahmasp II, presumably), recommending the Carmelites, dated 16.7.1731. (See vol. 104, *Epist. ad Princ.*, 2nd part, p. 1, in Arch. Vat., text in appendix.) After the usual complimentary prologue it ran:

“ . . . On that account We ask and ardently request of Your Highness that You will cherish with Your wonted royal ‘benevolence and protect Our beloved sons the Religious of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, who occupy themselves ‘with missions in those extensive dominions of Yours, and that You will accord them the assistance of Your authority ‘in any needs of their calling and duties. . . .”

⁷ See *Cont. Basra Chron.*

"Fr. Joseph Dominic of S. Rose arrived at Basra about this time: he was the last missionary at Shiraz, who, harassed by continual exactions¹ by the Persians and Armenians, "was compelled at length to abandon that Residence."

That was the end of 115 years of steadfast endeavour (less some breaks when no Carmelite was available for that post), of much abnegation and many privations suffered. What became of the church, so recently restored by Fr. Cyril, and the premises of the hospice? Did the few Armenians of the place occupy them and convert the church to use for schismatic rites, the predecessor of the present schismatic church in Shiraz, which exists from early in the 1800's? It is known, however, that "in the narrowing (of the limits) of the town that House of ours "was razed to its foundations," i.e. before 1772, from the report of Bishop Cornelius.² The only vestige came to light in 1926 when two broken pieces of stone taken outside the town to pave a water-channel, and ascertained to have come from the framework of gates erected round the citadel during the fighting between the wards in 1908-11 and recently dismantled, were found to have inscriptions with crosses cut in what evidently had been grave-stones: the words in Latin on the one read: Hic jacet (H)ABIB GIOERIDA, Obiit die XII IULII 1672 and record the burial of one of the Assyrian Catholic family so often mentioned in this work, brother or nephew of the first wife of the noted traveller and writer Pietro della Valle.

There can be little doubt, on the other hand, that the founding of a fresh mission at Bushire in 1745 was not permanent, for lack of priests to fill it, however much the Vicar of Julfa, Fr. Sebastian, might write to Rome, 29.5.1745:³

"... Fr. Urban ... the present provincial of our province of Persia and Arabia, has "gone off ... suddenly with one neophyte ... to Bushire, a seaport on the Persian "Gulf, where he straightway purchased a house with the help of Christians there, who for "so long past have been sighing for the Fathers to go to them. . . ."

In regard to Bandar 'Abbas—the modern port and small township is at a short distance from the site of Gāmburūn, where were the 'Factories' of European nations, small garrisoned forts in fact—there are to be found a number of instances of Carmelites being temporarily resident or dying on journeys from India to Basra, or inland to Isfahan. But it is in 1722 that the *Basra Chronicle* gives a definite reason for it being made a link in the chain of mission posts of the Carmelites—"because of the very large number of Christians who live at Bandar " 'Abbas Fr. Urban has been staying there sixteen months": the merchants, even the Protestants among them, were often generous and gifts made to the Carmelite chaplain helped the missionaries at Basra and Shiraz to eke out their existence in those days when they did not receive funds from Rome regularly. Not till 1732, however, is Bandar 'Abbas mentioned as a regular hospice, or was an attempt made to found one, *teste* the *Basra Chronicle*:

"Fr. John Joseph of S. Antony, a Frenchman from the province of Avignon, who had "arrived from Bandar 'Abbas at Basra on 29.6.1732, was sent to Bandar 'Abbas to found "that mission, 17.12.1732."⁴

He was the missionary previously so long at Hamadan, concerned in the tale of the casting of a cannon, and was speedily to fall a victim to the feverish climate—on 2.4.1733. Fr. Placid of S. Nicolas at that time Vicar Provincial showed persistence, and again on 23.10.1733 *Chron. Basra* notes:

"Fr. Placid, Vicar Provincial, with Lay Brother Augustine of the Purification, set out "for Bandar 'Abbas to establish a house there. . . ."

¹ "Continuis contributionibus vexatus."

² *S.N.R.*, VIII, p. 6.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 729.

⁴ "To make a small establishment in that mission post," wrote Fr. Urban, 13.6.1733, O.C.D. 242 h.

Fr. Placid himself did not return to Basra till 25.10.1734 (when he had finished making his visitation of the Persian missions), and Brother Augustine may have remained at Bandar 'Abbas only a short time, for he died at Masqat, 30.7.1737, when "coming from India to go "to Europe by sea". In any case Fr. Antoninus of S. Dionysius was sent to Bandar 'Abbas by the Vicar Provincial in September 1735, only in his turn to die of fever, 6.4.1736.

"The French, English and Dutch had citadels and soldiers there, and their ships were "continually going to India and returning, but now under the rule of the new Tyrant it "has much diminished (in importance). A few Christians are to be found"

occurs in the report of Fr. Emmanuel written when he was Procurator for the Mission in Rome, 1740.¹ Then there was probably an interval when no Carmelite was, or could be, sent from Basra, for,² 14.12.1744, there was read in the Session of the Sacr. Congregation a communication from the Dominicans of Sta Sabina regarding

"Fr. Felicissimus Barberi, O.P., (who) passed on to the life beyond in the port of Bandar " 'Abbas, where he had been sent by Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan to administer the Sacra- "ments to the Catholics there, deprived for a long time past of a priest and the Sacraments."

Even of recent years Bandar 'Abbas has been called feelingly by Europeans compelled to reside there "the gate of hell" on account of its climate: in the early eighteenth century, without the hygiene and medicine and skilled doctors of today it was, as one Carmelite expressed it, "a cemetery for the Religious". According to *Cont. Basra. Chron.*, in the beginning of 1755

"Fr. Urban of S. Elisaeus by direction of the Fr. Vicar Provincial left Bandar 'Abbas, "where he had laboured several years,"

for Kharg Island. However, by 1763 it had been abandoned by the East India Company, the last of the European Factories, in favour of Bushire because of the intolerable conduct of the Persian Khans of Lar, and all motive for posting a missionary there must have ceased, as far as care of Catholics was concerned.

Next, the episcopal residence at Hamadan may be taken. In appealing to the Cardinal Prefect for financial aid in view of "the deplorable condition of the Missions in Persia, Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, 1.10.1731,³ reported that, owing to the total defeat of the Persian force, and recapture of the town by the Turks

"for the third time this poor mission at Hamadan is ruined. Fr. John Joseph, who was there, has fled to Isfahan. . . ."

"Only the church remained intact," so Fr. Joseph Mary understood according to another letter from Baghdad, of 4.7.1732.⁴ In 1734 the pro-Vicar Apostolic posted at Hamadan Fr. Charles Raymond and in due course reported once more to Rome:⁵

". . . I have received a letter from Hamadan yesterday evening from my companion "Fr. Charles, who writes that he is living in tranquillity in the bishop's house, but that it is "uninhabitable and almost in ruins, as there are neither doors nor windows nor beams, "all having been burnt by soldiers in the wars, besides which the roofs are falling down and "the walls of the garden have already fallen, so he asks for money to repair it. To repair "it will cost at least 500 scudi. . . ."

¹ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 577.

² *S.R.*, vol. 721, p. 256.

³ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 548.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 216.

⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 684, p. 42.

Evidently after the earlier reports the Sacr. Congregation required additional information from the Bishop-elect of Isfahan, whose letter, 21.11.1734,¹ began:

"On the 9th instant I received Your Eminence's letter of 21.11.1733, in which you communicate to me that the Sacr. Congregation desires from me a detailed, exact and confidential statement regarding the state in which the church and house at Hamadan of the bishopric of Baghdad are at present:

"(a) details as to the actual conditions of the church and house; (b) at what cost the repairs to each can be done, (lastly) what precisely are the numbers and kinds of articles for furnishing, with which the church might be provided, and to what amount such expenses might come.

"To which I reply that at the same time as your Eminence's letter was received there was in our House at Julfa the servant of the House at Hamadan, whom I had known when I passed by there on my first coming out to the mission" (1717) "and who had always continued to be the servant there and to live in it with his family, and left it about two months ago. After interrogating him I gathered that: 'the church, sacristy and refectory and some other rooms are in their former condition with doors and windows: that all the rest, which with those just mentioned come to twenty in number approximately, lack doors, windows, water-conduits, etc. In addition, in some of the rooms the ceilings had fallen, or the roofs, which being made of mud in the rains are liable to such accidents unless repaired; (a) the total cost of repairs to roofs, windows, doors and all the damage done by soldiers would amount to 3 Tumans, if greater damage be not caused by the coming winter season through those repairs not having been effected; (b) there was one closed room with various books in it. In 1737 the Father dwelling at Hamadan left for fear of the wars and took away with him the ornaments of the church. . . .'"

It must have been Fr. Charles Raymond, whom the former Vicar Apostolic Fr. Joseph Mary (still in Mesopotamia) designated, when he wrote² to the Sacr. Congregation about the house:

"For four years or more it was without anyone to look after it, so that it lay open to all, and almost was a den of thieves . . . my companion . . . went and wrote that he had found it empty of all furniture but full of 'Turks' whom he could not turn out. . . ."

However, by later in that year, 9.9.1735,³ something had been done according to Fr. Emmanuel:

"The bishop's House at Hamadan . . . is now in excellent condition. I sent there a Religious almost a year ago . . . I gave him sufficient money for his maintenance and the repairs needed . . . last week I received a further letter telling me how the house was very well restored, and that he had finished the walls of the garden and enclosure, and the doors and windows of the house and church, but there still remain the roofs to be made. . . ."

Writing again, 8.3.1736,⁴ Fr. Emmanuel alluded to the receipt from Rome of 200 scudi specially for repairs and explained:

"in place of Fr. Charles, a missionary from Persia, who was serving me as companion while I was awaiting the one from Rome, I sent, 13.1.(1736), Fr. Leander . . . who came with your Eminence's letter . . ."

¹ S.N.R., IV, p. 353.

² *Idem*, p. 385.

³ *Idem*, p. 390.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 375.

What Fr. Leander himself thought is recorded in his published work, *Secondo Viaggio*. Fr. Charles Raymond, whom he found at Baghdad on his arrival there, 18.12.1735,

"did not want to return to Hamadan unless the pro-Vicar Apostolic kept it up better than
"in the past. . . . On 7.1.1736 I left . . . we arrived at 21 o'clock¹ at Hamadan and,
"entering the House, found that doors and windows had been taken away, and there was
"no place to get out of the cold . . ."

Interesting exhibits in the archives of Propaganda Fide are the receipts given by Frs. Charles Raymond and Leander respectively for their maintenance and for expenditure on the premises at Hamadan between 28.12.1734 and 8.3.1736.² Then Fr. Emmanuel, the pro-Vicar Apostolic, himself went to superintend the repairs:³

"Immediately after Easter I left Baghdad to go and visit the House at Hamadan. I
"found it necessary to effect many repairs . . . but it can be said to be a sort of miracle
"that the church and House have remained as they are, seeing that it is still the best
"preserved building there is in all Hamadan. *The town itself is totally destroyed*, and can be
"sooner called a heap of stones than a town. I have remade the roofs, altogether re-done
"the walls of the enclosure and the garden, the watercourses, whitewashed the rooms
"afresh and re-made the windows and doors, purchased a chalice, copes, surplices and, in
"fine, all necessary objects for the church. Fr. Leander of the Roman province is there. . . .
"So after four months . . . I returned to Baghdad . . . my arrival was on 4.9.1736. . . ."

The pro-Vicar Apostolic had obtained from Constantinople an order, by virtue of which he had built the church at Hamadan, according to a letter of Fr. Philip Mary.⁴ In 1737, however, when Fr. Leander was already back in Baghdad, near the bishop's house at Hamadan a

"Persian seized possession of the water-supply essential for the House and garden: no
"title deeds were available and there was no money to expend on bribes . . ."

and in 1739

"Fr. Leander wrote that he had paid out 55 piastres for fines levied in Hamadan and that
"the two servants of the House and an Armenian Catholic were severely bastinadoed, and
"forced to pay 24 'hazar'⁵ which together with the 55 piastres make 254 Roman scudi—
"that is the miserable state of the house at Hamadan. . . ."⁶

According to that report of 1740 to the Sacr. Congregation, Hamadan

'contains about 100 families of the Armenian rite, all heretical, more obstinate than any
'others in all Persia . . . although there are no true Catholics to be found in the town,
'there are not lacking outsiders who frequent the church. . . .'

By the time he had been consecrated bishop of Baghdad and had gained a footing in that city and made the nucleus of a Catholic parish, however, Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert had changed his mind about Hamadan: in a letter of 1744 from Malta:⁷

¹ The present Italian system for numbering the hours was in use 200 years ago. or is this Persian computation—
ba'd az dasteh? ² *S.N.R.*, IV, pp. 376, 378, 422, 423, 424. ³ *Idem*, p. 421, 2.10.1736.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 419, letter of 29.9.1735.

⁶ Fr. Emmanuel's report of 1740 in Rome.

⁵ Presumably 'hazar' (1,000) dinar, the modern term for 1 qran.
⁷ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 124.

"I ought also to represent to your Eminence that the episcopal House is situated in Hamadan . . . in the jurisdiction and diocese of Isfahan: that in that town there is not even one single Catholic; that this House is 18 days' distance by road from the diocese of Baghdad: that for 30 years past on various occasions it has been sacked and destroyed: that this town, being on the frontier of Turkish territory, is always exposed to the first attack—for all these reasons the missionaries sent by the bishop remain there unwillingly and consume the greater part of their allowances on their journeys and their maintenance. So, if your Eminences deem it suitable, it would appear to your petitioner to be convenient to abandon that House, in ruins and of small value, to the Carmelite Fathers in Isfahan, in order to compensate them for their claims on it, your petitioner engaging to construct or buy another in his own diocese with the same sum as is required for the restoration of that of Hamadan. This would be very useful for the diocese of Baghdad, in which there would be working the missionaries at present appointed to go to Hamadan purely as custodians of the House. Your petitioner hopes to be the first" (bishop) "to reside in his diocese. . . . The Most Christian king, his sovereign, has given him every facility by nominating him his consul in the diocese and city of Baghdad, where he hopes under the royal protection to establish a new bishop's house. . . ."

Occupation by Carmelites of the premises at Hamadan lapsed, therefore, almost simultaneously about 1738 with that of the Residence at Shiraz: it had been mainly ownership by the Sacr. Congregation and thus a special interest in the conservation of the fabric, which had caused it to be a post for Carmelites since 1719.

At Basra the Carmelite station remained, in comparison to all the others, tranquil and immune from actual warfare, if at times menaced from outside during the reign of Nadir Shah and by raids of the Muntafiq Arabs in 1741: and there is little exceptional to record. The Vicar Provincial, Fr. Urban of S. Elisaeus,¹ had bidden

"Fr. John Thomas copy the New Testament in Turkish, which I had done at great pains for the good of this mission, as we had only one copy of the book (translated by a heretic) . . . so useful in Persian and Arabic. . . ."

"At Basra, where I remained about one month" (reported Bishop Philip Mary of Isfahan to the Sacr. Congregation, 29.9.1736,²) "there are two missionary Fathers of our Order, to whom the opportunity for exercising their ministry is not wanting, while besides some Catholic families settled there and one household of French merchants every year there arrive various ships, whether of that nation or English or Dutch, on board which there are usually Catholic folk and among them sick persons who all have need of spiritual help: from time to time they baptize adults: in addition there are passengers of every kind of Christian from various parts, for which reason, besides the Arabic of the country, Turkish Armenian and also Greek are necessary. The *Armenian schismatics since the revolution in Persia have opened a church of their rite here. . . .*"

"Ten or twelve families of Christians domiciled there, and many French, English, Dutch traders",

was the summary given by Fr. Emmanuel to the Sacr. Congregation in his report of 1740³ as Procurator for the Mission. The Religious were, however, troubled in precisely the same way as Bishop Fedeli of Isfahan had been by the French consul in 1730—by the exigencies of a French consul, Monsieur Pierre Martainville, who arrived at Basra from Pondicherry, 26.6.1739, and after demanding and retaining the title deeds and 'farmans' of the Mission claimed for himself a seat in the sanctuary of the church, and insisted that after sung Mass not only an 'Oremus' for the king of France, but also one for himself should be sung—"an innovation never till now met in the Church or admitted even in the colony of Pondicherry for their

¹ Letter of 13.6.1733, O.C.D. 242 h.

² S.N.R., IV, p. 419.

³ *Idem*, p. 577.

“governors”. His extravagant pretensions at control over the mission went so far as to protest at more candles being lit in church on the feast of the great saint of the Order, S. Teresa of Avila, than on that of S. Louis, king of France; so that *Cont. Basra Chron.* commented with humour on the after-effects of the protection of the French ambassador at Constantinople, sought and obtained by Fr. Angelus of S. Joseph in 1683 for the Carmelite mission at Basra, recoiling on the missionaries just as Samuel had warned the people of Israel when they asked for a king. However, that consul died a humble and Christian death at Basra in 1741. Readers, who turn to the section of this work dealing with the Carmelite Residence at Basra separately, will find much of interest about the history of the port.

Although Baghdad and its diocese lie outside the strict limits of the “Persian” mission of the Carmelites, it would be a loss of a suitable opportunity not to note here a few unpublished facts and statements regarding the early days of the Catholic community there, and its active and efficient pro-Vicar Apostolic.

Shortly after Fr. Emmanuel finished his six months’ course of learning Turkish in Hamadan, and returned to Baghdad in the summer of 1730, he sailed from Basra, 7.7.1730, for Pondicherry to obtain the protection of the French Authorities there in his dealings with the Pasha of Baghdad.

“In order to place this mission on a stable and profitable basis . . . I considered the sole “method would be for a petition to be presented to the French viceroy in the East Indies “so that a letter be addressed (by him) to the governor of Baghdad (to the effect) that “it would be convenient that the French should become established there with every “kind of liberty. . . . Having learnt the reason for my arrival, the viceroy summoned the “Council . . . my petition . . . being approved, he sent me back very courteously with “letters and gifts. . . . As the governor (Pasha) of Baghdad received me and the gifts “brought favourably, he (the Pasha) gave permission for us to found a House. . . .”¹

A French vessel brought Fr. Emmanuel back to Basra by 25.5.1731: in that year he purchased for 500 piastres a ruined house, the site of which would be ample for a house and chapel, which was dedicated to S. Thomas, Apostle of the Indies: on 1.10.1731² he was able to write to the Cardinal Prefect:

“We have re-established the mission at Baghdad lost” (i.e. by the Capuchins) “more than “twenty years ago.”

Before July 1732,³ leaving in charge his predecessor who remained with the status of an apostolic missionary, he had again quitted Baghdad, this time for Constantinople: and, owing to the hostilities between Persia and Turkey and to the road being blocked, it was about May 1734 before the pro-Vicar Apostolic was back in Baghdad, previous letters he had written to the Sacr. Congregation having been looted by robbers from Fr. John Thomas of Basra, returning to Europe. Two letters of Fr. Joseph Mary, 26.4.1735, and of Fr. Emmanuel, 9.9.1735,⁴ agree about the infant mission, the former asserting:

“Our church is a constant marvel, for among the Turks it is prohibited, and almost “unheard, to build a new and public church . . .”,

while the latter, in reporting to Rome that

“this mission in Baghdad is also in excellent order, and the missionaries can stay in it in all safety . . .”,

¹ Bishop Emmanuel, Latin report, published Rome, 1756.

² *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 548.

³ Fr. Joseph Mary, *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 226: this Religious was alone through two sieges of the city in 1733 and 1734, when it was reduced to the utmost misery, *vide* his letter 26.4.1735, *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 385.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, IV, pp. 385, 390.

gave one evident reason for that:

"because a month ago the Pasha, named Isma'il, whom I was serving as physician and who "therefore is very well disposed, has been made Grand Vizir, the highest dignity in the "Empire; and before leaving for Constantinople he granted me a decree under his seal "that no one should molest us in our House, and that we can perform our Office in all "freedom, a very singular mark of favour since, despite their power, our ambassadors have "very great difficulty in obtaining it, even for a large bribe of money. . . ."

When the new Bishop of Isfahan passed through Baghdad on the return journey from his consecration, Fr. Emmanuel explained to Rome, 2.10.1736:¹

"I begged repeatedly this worthy prelate to be so good as to confer the Sacrament of "Confirmation so necessary to these poor Catholics, and to ordain a deacon to serve this "church, but Monseigneur showed me the form of oath which he took . . . by which he "cannot in any way exercise such a function, even with the permission of the Ordinary of "the place. . . ."

In 1737 there was strife between the Pashas of Baghdad and Basra, and the former was avaricious: neither the decrees of his predecessor nor the protection of the French ambassador nor recommendations by Mr. French of Basra saved the pro-Vicar Apostolic: and after a period of quiet once again schismatic Armenian malice is seen at work:

"A heretic Armenian of Baghdad instigated the Pasha of Baghdad, who . . . sent an "armed party with officials, 25.8.1737, into the church, where Mass was proceeding. . . ."

Fr. Emmanuel went on to describe how he was able to hide under the vestments the sacred vessels and, taken off with all the Catholics to the prison, there to consume the Blessed Sacrament. Through the "English merchant" (i.e. the Agent or Factor of the East India Company at Basra) he was liberated, but again in twenty-four hours arrested and then kept in a worse prison for three days, during which he suffered much harsh treatment. To secure their liberty the Christians had to disburse some 25,000 piastres, and Fr. Emmanuel, to obtain in addition permission to exercise his functions, had to pay 685 piastres (= 274 scudi), advanced to him also by the English merchant as a loan.² In his printed report of 1753-4 to the Pope, his own words were:

"I myself and the principal Catholics were put in fetters; but, when the sum of 30,000 "piastres had been paid by the Catholics, 700 by myself, our fetters were unfastened, the "church restored, and the Catholics allowed to go free as before. I informed the Most "Christian king" (i.e. of France) "and his envoy at the Ottoman Porte of this insult. The "king judging that a commission as consul would be greatly to my protection was pleased "to honour me with it, appointing me consul of the French nation, and at the same time "instructed his envoy to protect our mission as much as he could both by gifts and by "commendatory letters to the governor, by which steps for some while we enjoyed peace "and tranquillity. The heretic Armenians, giving up hope of doing us injury, ceased from "raging against us. . . ."

The Armenian, who instigated this wickedness and mischief, soon obtained due reward: although he was some sort of official of the Pasha, for some words spoken when drunk against the Quran he was deprived of all his money, bastinadoed and dismissed. Immediately after the

¹ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 421.

² *S.R.*, vol. 703, p. 487, minute in Sac. Cong. on report of Fr. Emmanuel submitted in Rome, 21.9.1740.

release of Fr. Emmanuel an epidemic¹ started, and he caught it while attending spiritually to local Christians and was ill for a whole year as the result. From the season of the year this contagion is unlikely to have been plague and may have been cholera, unless typhoid fever. *Cont. Basra Chron.* records it as a "malignus influxus . . . nos detulit diuturnis cruciavit infirmitatibus ita ut taederet vivere". There the Carmelites lost from it Fr. Charles Balthasar, 4.11.1737, and Frs. Cyril of the Holy Spirit and Placid were both kept in bed with it: Mr. Peter French, the English 'Resident', died at the end of the epidemic.

In March 1739 Fr. Emmanuel set out for Rome, for one reason as Procurator for the Carmelite missions to attend the Chapter General, for another he needed to apply personally to the Sacr. Congregation for more assistance in money and men for the growing work and wide limits of his sphere: and away from Baghdad he remained till 5.7.1746 from a variety of causes. On 14.5.1742 the contumacious Jansenist, Mgr Varlet, died in Holland: the bishopric of Baghdad thus became vacant and in the Session of the Congregation, 25.6.1742, Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert was nominated to succeed him, the approval of the Pope being given, 30.6.1742, and the Bull of Pope Benedict XIV is dated 26.11.1742:² he was promoted in the Consistory of that day. He was already in Aleppo when the news was brought to him, turned back to Malta for consecration³ and monetary troubles kept him in that island till June 1744 in correspondence with the Sacr. Congregation. It is a contrast to place his letter to the Cardinal Prefect of 26.1.1743 with its "sentiments of liveliest gratitude" for his nomination alongside those of Fr. Dimas and Fr. Dionysius with their horror, and vehement refusal of similar episcopal appointments a hundred years previously.

In forwarding the certificate of his consecration, which took place on 21.12.1743 in the cathedral at Valletta, and in a memorial to the Pope at the same time (8.2.1744)⁴, as also in

¹ It may interest medical men and others to have other evidence from the Carmelites regarding occurrences of epidemics in Mesopotamia and Syria. The diary of their mission at Aleppo (*vide Études Carmelitaines*, January 1925, p. 162) gives under 1719:

"Towards the end of February plague appeared in this city, of which account all began to be greatly afraid, because it was already many years since there had (last) been any: so they had great apprehension that it would be very severe, particularly as it had begun in February—a very bad sign. Contrary to their wont the Turks themselves became very anxious at the danger, and to avoid it many of them went off elsewhere on the pretext of selling their wares: others shut themselves up in their houses on other pretexts, but never saying that they were running away or shutting themselves up out of fear of the plague, for that in their eyes would have been a sort of apostasy.

"Of the Christians of the country a large proportion went off travelling: others withdrew to villages and neighbouring towns: others locked themselves in their houses after the fashion of the Franks. Many, however, did not pay much attention to this scourge and, unable to do otherwise, continued their business as usual.

"The Jews went away, all of them, with their families. and the Franks according to their wont locked themselves in their houses, except for some English merchants who withdrew to the mountains. The first to shut himself up was the French consul in the middle of March: after him the English consul, then the merchants: and last of all the Religious. . . . The plague began to do its work vigorously, so that in the city alone it came to there dying every day 2,000 to 3,000 persons, apart from those who were dying outside the gates. . . . Of the Christians it came to their dying at the rate of 130 to 140 daily. Of the Turks it is reckoned that 150,000 died of it: of the Christians about 12,000. Of the Jews 500 to 600 died at the beginning, then they all went away, as mentioned. What, however, is astonishing is that, after so heavy a mortality no diminution" (of inhabitants) "was to be noted in the city: the various quarters are as full as previously . . . and from this it can be judged what the size of the population is in this city. . . ." Then, "in 1733 there was plague in this city of Aleppo. . . . The mortality in this city has not been so great in comparison to other epidemics of plague: it is thought that 40,000 to 50,000 persons in all died. . . ."

Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert wrote from Sidon, 12.7.1733 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 274):

"In this town the plague is almost finished: letters from Tripoli report that it is raging there now . . ."; and then from Aleppo, 24.9.1733 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 278) he continued. "I arrived in Aleppo 17.9.1733: plague had entirely ceased after having done tremendous carnage: upwards of 60,000 dead is the number calculated. among them no European except one Father of ours (Fr. Jerome) who had exposed himself for the sake of those infected."

During his next, protracted stay in Aleppo another epidemic broke out. Writing thence, 30.6.1743 (*S.N.R.*, V, p. 86) he mentioned:

"Here in Aleppo we are shut up in our houses, as well as all the Franks, on account of a great plague, and during the two months and some days we have been shut up in our houses already about 20,000 people have died. The severe heat begins to master this epidemic. Of the Christians about 1,500 are dead, but few Catholics among them: and, what makes everyone marvel is that the plague seems to have been sent as a punishment of the heretic Armenians on account of the great persecution stirred up by them against the Catholics. Plague did not allow me to approach Constantinople and other places," he remarked in another letter of 13.11.1743: so he went to Malta, where "for eight days I was in quarantine", he remarked in another letter of 15.11.1749.

² *Vide Acta* for 1742, p. 250, quoted by Fr. Lemmens in *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10.

³ "I shall have to wait too long in Aleppo, if I wait till the end of this war" (letter of 30.6.1743).

⁴ *S.N.R.*, V, pp. 106-14.

letters of 22.12.1743 and 28.3.1744, he insistently pressed for payment in full of the receipts from the endowment fund of the bishopric, claiming that the yield for 26 years' previous non-tenure of the see was due to him by the words of the Bull of Pope Urban VIII, which prohibits such income from ever being employed under any pretext, or in any way other than in the maintenance of the bishop and his diocese. In his letter of 28.3.1744¹ he remarked:

"From Rome they write to me that the annual yield from the endowment amounts to 522 scudi, 39 baiocchi. I have been rather surprised at such a diminution, since in the time of the last bishop but one, Mgr Pidou de St. Olon, it brought in more than 800 Roman scudi, as I have seen in his account-books. . . ."

(As vicar apostolic, by decree of 26.9.1740 he got 210 scudi.)

No sooner had he quitted Baghdad in March 1739 to go to Rome than difficulties had arisen for the Christians: Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia, who according to his *Secondo Viaggio* acted as physician to the Pasha as well as in charge of the mission during the pro-Vicar Apostolic's absence, 1739-46, informed him by letter of 26.6.1739:²

"I wrote another letter to your Reverence, in which I related the persecution which I suffered from the Turks immediately you had departed. . . ."

Fr. Emmanuel's own report, submitted to the Sac. Congregation with his letter of 22.4.1740,³ spoke of

"Baghdad . . . containing about 150 families of Syrian, Nestorian, Chaldaean and Armenian Christians, the greater part of whom have embraced the Catholic Faith: the others recognize the Faith, show the greatest veneration for the Roman Sec, but are kept back by fear of the Turks and the heretical priests. . . ."

His letter in question pressed for another companion,⁴ a request found reasonable and granted: for more than 30 years the Bishop's two chief assistants were to be Fr. Fidelis of S. Teresa, a Lombard, who was sent to the mission 15.4.1738, and Fr. Constantius of S. Hyacinth, a Burgundian, sent out 14.4.1741.

On his return to Baghdad, 5.7.1746, the new Bishop was

"received with great respect and honour by the governor of that city on the occasion when I took him the letters and a fine present from our ambassador at Constantinople, so that he may grant his protection to the bishop and the missionaries. So I hope that in the future we shall be undisturbed under the protection of the Most Christian king. . . ."

But he continued to have difficulty in financing his diocesan expenses: on 16.5.1749⁵ indeed he was obliged to point out that

"this is the fifth year that I have received none of the money of my allowance. . . ."

In other parts of Mesopotamia at this time Catholic activity was at work under stimulus from Rome: already in 1736 on his passage through *Mardin* Bishop Philip Mary of Isfahan thought it his duty to inform the Sac. Congregation that he had

"found a zealous Armenian bishop, Martiros, who with his clergy and all his very numerous flock practises in public the Catholic Faith to the glory of God; but he is of advanced age

¹ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 116.

² *Idem*, IV, p. 506.

³ *Idem*, IV, p. 517.

⁴ The Religious sent was to be assigned 80 scudi for the journey. It was estimated that, embarkation taking place at Marseilles, it would take 30 days from that port to Alexandretta, passage and food expenses costing at least 20 scudi: then 4 days from Alexandretta to Aleppo, from Aleppo to Baghdad 30 days, from Baghdad to Hamadan 20 days.

⁵ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 323.

"and I fear that after his death, if there be no other Catholic bishop, as that church is a dependency of the Armenian patriarch at Echmiadzin . . ."

"At *Diarbakr*, notwithstanding persecution by Armenians and Syrians there were various people coming to the church of the Capuchin Fathers: as to the Chaldaeans the absence¹ for long past of the Patriarch, or Archbishop, Joseph is very prejudicial to religion especially in Mausil, where many men who formerly were Catholics are so no longer, and I have heard it said that there is a single priest with one Catholic deacon there; the latter being procurator for the archbishop has kept Catholic a large village, but they fear that, if the archbishop does not soon come back, that little will be lost too and, as for 12 years past the Capuchins have been gone, the people here are in great need of spiritual assistance . . ."

Some seven years passed and then it would seem the Sacr. Congregation had suggested to the Bishop of Baghdad that pioneer work should be done in Kirkuk, for he wrote:²

" . . . As to the town of Kirkuk, where you desire that I should send some Religious . . . I had already some time before written to Baghdad for the purpose and a few days back received a letter of 7.5.1743 from Fr. Benedict, Vicar of that mission, who told me that he was leaving at daybreak to give a mission in Kirkuk, a town about eight days' distance from Baghdad, where there are a large number of Nestorians very ignorant of religion . . ."

and, 20.4.1746, he wrote again to Rome:

"Twelve days ago I dispatched two Religious to Kirkuk and to Mausil to missionize there: at Kirkuk there is great difficulty and little profit, but at Mausil it would be most easy to establish a mission and, if the Sacr. Cong. would provide a grant, two Religious might be planted there immediately. There are already many good Catholics there, and good hope of soon making many others, besides a number of villages deprived of any" (spiritual) "assistance. The two Religious I have sent will remain there two months and then return to Baghdad. I have had a chalice made and everything needed for Mausil. . . . It is more than twenty years since the Capuchin Fathers abandoned that mission. . . ."

Then in 1747 the Sacr. Congregation decided³ to send back Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia (who had returned to Rome from Baghdad in 1746) with two other Carmelites, Frs. Ferdinand of Jesus Mary and Eugenius of S. Macarius, on a special mission to upper Mesopotamia, independent to all intents and purposes of the Carmelite mission at Baghdad and of the bishop of that diocese. The 'Instructions' for Fr. Leander, dated 10.7.1747,⁴ were thus worded:

"Immediately after he has arrived in Mesopotamia the first duty of Fr. Leander will be to transmit to the Sacr. Congregation an exact report of the present conditions of the missions there and results that can be expected therefrom: and to enquire mainly what are the rites observed by the Chaldaean Catholics and Nestorians in the administration of the Sacraments, and to send a copy of the breviary and liturgy of which each make use in celebrating the Divine mysteries. It is further desired to know what may be the present discipline with regard to the feasts and fasts, what is the standard and the education of the bishops and priests. As it is asserted by various historians and travellers that Nestorianism is one of the most docile in the East, he is to inform himself about any disposition they may have for embracing the Catholic Faith, and what are the causes that

¹ He had gone to Rome, and was permitted to return to Diarbakr only in 1741—see farther on.

² 30.6.1743, *S.N.R.*, V, p. 86.

³ Perhaps influenced by a memorandum by Fr. Leander, dated 25.6.1747 (*S.R.*, vol. 733, p. 429) on the Chaldaean missions, in which he pointed out that in 1665 Mausil had been assigned to the French Capuchins to maintain 3 priests for 60 scudi annual allowance: in 1667 Diarbakr similarly, and in 1691 Mardin: he asserted that the Capuchins had never worked in Mardin, nor for years past in Mausil.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 186.

"may keep back their union with the true Church. He is to try and insinuate himself into the favour of the heretic patriarch and bishops, and persuade them of the Catholic truth, but in a kindly spirit and not contentiously, avoiding noisy disputes which ordinarily do not bring any profit, but rather produce the worst effects. *He is to make them understand that the Roman Pontiffs wish their community to preserve its own rite, and remove from their minds the false supposition conceived by many that it is sought to convert them to the Catholic Faith in order to make them take on the Latin rite.* . . . It is a defect in not a few missionaries to think an oriental Christian well converted because he has pronounced and signed the profession of Faith, but it often happens that they read out and subscribe what they do not understand.

"The Sacr. Congregation keeps two of that (*Chaldaean*) race in the *Urban College*, and desirous to introduce more to its spiritual advantages has lately arranged places for two others, i.e. one from Mausil and one from Mardin. So it will be Fr. Leander's duty to select them in agreement with the Catholic patriarch¹ Joseph III. Also in Mardin there are a Catholic bishop and many Catholic Armenians, and the Sacr. Congregation has also allotted one place for a youth of that rite, who will be dispatched by Fr. Leander in consultation with that bishop. Finally, as the Holy See allows its Catholic patriarchs in the East to appoint the bishops to the dioceses subject to their patriarchates without asking the permission of the Sovereign Pontiff, or seeking his confirmation . . ."

Fr. Leander and his two companions left Venice on or about 7.8.1747: the patriarch Joseph III himself in a letter of 15.12.1747² from Diarbakr reported their arrival on 26.11.1747, adding "it is probable that in about twenty days Fr. Leander will leave for Baghdad, having been appointed his physician by the Pasha". In fact, Fr. Leander forthwith proceeded to leave the area in which he had been appointed to work, as his letter of 13.12.1747³ shows:

"I managed at once to get into the favour of the Pasha governing the town of Diarbakr, so that he has taken me as his doctor: he was troubled with a certain malady which by God's help soon disappeared, so that, having been made Pasha of Baghdad, he wants to take me with him at all costs."

He left, 6.1.1748, for Baghdad: and another letter of 28.12.1747 to the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation somewhat frivolously began:

"If your Illustr. lordship could see Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia clothed in Turkish dress,⁴ without rest for an hour day and night, during the day besieged by Turks, visited at night by Christians . . ."

However, Fr. Eugenius took up residence at Mardin in January 1648, Fr. Ferdinand remaining in Diarbakr, and Fr. Leander after five months in Baghdad returned to Diarbakr himself.

¹ This Chaldaean Catholic patriarch is mentioned in a letter of Fr. Joseph Mary from Baghdad, 12.7.1729 (*S.N.R.*, IV, p. 535) as having obtained a decree from the Sultan of Turkey placing under him the Christians hitherto under the jurisdiction of the patriarch Elias of the Nestorians. Armed with this decree he had come to Mausil to take possession of the churches in that town, but was resisted by the schismatics, who sent a protest to Constantinople. Joseph III also sent a priest that year to take possession of the Nestorian church in Baghdad with like result. According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* he himself went to Constantinople in 1731 "to protest against the incessant arrogances of the Nestorians". Then he proceeded to Rome, where it was intimated to him to return to his patriarchate. He was, however, unable to reach it, and again appeared in Rome in 1735, where for 6 years he was kept in seclusion.

² *S.N.R.*, V, p. 229. On 14.5.1752 Briefs were issued to the Emperor Charles and to the kings of France, Spain, Portugal and Poland, and the Republic of Venice asking assistance for the Patriarch Joseph "turned out by schismatics from his see at Amid" (see *Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 104, p. 155).

³ *Idem*, pp. 288, 291.

⁴ The Aleppo diary of the Carmelites (see *Études Carmelitaines*, January 1925, p. 162) under the year 1735 records a prohibition to Christians to wear clothes of certain colours. The first in 1735 forbade all Christians to wear yellow garments: the Pasha levied many 'purses' in fines, so that for one month continuously it was expedient for Christians to wear "red clothing." A portrait of an English merchant resident in Angora till about 1770, afterwards at Salonica, shows him with head shaved except for moustaches, wearing a turban and Turkish garb.

After this pioneer work by the Carmelites in Baghdad and upper Mesopotamia during the period covered by the present chapter, which was the more encouraging because in previous decades residence as well as activities of Latin missionaries had been frequently interrupted or prevented by Turkish officials, there remains to be noted the situation of the Catholic units in the Armenian Caucasus and Tabriz, which was discouraging and indeed desperate. As regards Tabriz little is to be observed after the Capuchin mission reopened, following the earthquake and sack by the Turks. In 1738 Fr. Clement from Oleron was transferred thence to Isfahan to replace the dead Fr. Denys from Bourges: and in that year the physician Fr. Damian from Lyons was sent to Tabriz, though he was absent with the Persian monarch for most of the time. But in the province of Nakhchiwan Fr. Thomas Aquinas of Shiran in Alingia, Prior of one of the Dominican convents, on his way to collect funds, represented in Rome to the Sacr. Congregation, 16.6.1736:¹

"in the wars between the Turks and Persians . . . the former after a great rout they "suffered" (doubtless the defeat of 'Abdullah Pasha Kupruli in August 1735) "returned to "vent their anger on the Christians, of whom they slew a great number, among them the "Dominican friars of that province, so that of seventy Dominicans that there were only "six remained" (elsewhere he was more precise—17 Dominicans had been killed together with many lay Catholics). "All the others having been, some killed, some put in prison "and carried off as slaves: and the Turks, not having stopped at that in their rage, destroyed "their convents to such an extent that of ten there had been previously only two remained "standing, and they carried away with them all the sacred furniture and other ornaments "of the churches. . . ."

It was in that parlous condition that, returning from Europe after his consecration, Archbishop Dominic M. Salvini, O.P., found his diocese and flock on his arrival in the autumn of 1736: he had sent in a report to the Sacr. Congregation to that effect.² An examination of the registers in the series *Epistolae ad Principes* in the Vatican secret archives showed only five Briefs issued to the Shahs of Persia from the beginning of the Afghan invasion, i.e. over the years 1722 to 1740: three were on behalf of the Dominicans: that of 18.7.1737 addressed to "Sak Nadir regi Persarum," was worded (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 106, p. 417):

"Pope Clement XII to the illustrious and most puissant Shah Nadir King of the Persians.

"Although the disturbed condition of everything in the famed kingdom of the Persians "has been such that it is not to be wondered that many things have happened there which "can by no means be held to have befallen in a peaceful state, yet howsoever that be held "somewhat of weight to excuse a misfortune suffered, to alleviate it nothing else than kind "acts of Your Highness can avail.

"It is to these, therefore, that the orthodox, members of the very religious Dominican "family, flee for safety. How cruelly in the previous years they have been harried there by "the raging hurricane of warfare is probably not hidden from Your Highness. Some of "them carried off by hunger, others perished by the sword, the rest, their houses burnt, "their fances demolished and pillaged, the remaining ones wandering scattered and fugitives "live a life harder than any death, detained there only by Christian charity lest the Catholic "Armenians, whom they have been in the habit of instructing in the worship of sacred things, "should be wholly left without their help.

"But since they are unable any longer to practise so very wretched a mode of living, and "an immense anxiety possesses Us by virtue of Our supreme charge of the entire Christian "people, We recommend them most especially to Your guardianship so that they may be "able freely to fulfil the office undertaken long ago, and We entreat that You will be "pleased to revive with Your most powerful royal protection those same companions and "particularly their Superior Alexis son of Alexis and his associate Peter son of John, and

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 687.

² *Idem*, vol. 703, p. 433.

"give orders that they be not subjected to any inconvenience, nor prevented from repairing their houses and fanes, and lastly that in future they must not be burdened with any tribute, which is wont to be collected as a poll-tax.

"Hope that You will willingly grant them this is given Us by the very humane disposition, for which You are noted, and which, planted by nature in Your highly cultured race, You yourself possess above others and admirably foster, rivalling the most glorious kings Your forerunners, whose custom it was to entreat Our Catholics with kindness and signal favours, and to lend ready ears to the requests of the Sovereign Pontiff of the Christians and to comply with what he said. And certainly the members (of the Order) have something by which to make an approach to Your clemency in their regard. For they have been seen to have suffered so many tribulations because of the fidelity they have observed, taking Your side with marked zealously, nor ever have they ceased to pronounce vows to immortal God for Your happiness. Only let them be restored by Your generosity to their former liberty and dignity and they will apply their prayers for You the more ardently. . . . Given at Rome, the 18th day of July 1737."

This Brief, followed two months later, 23.9.1737, by another¹ (*Epist. ad Princ.* vol. 106, p. 456—see appendix) also strongly urging the compassion of Nadir Shah for their hard lot, at first buoyed up with sanguine hope the miserable Nakhchiwanis, and Archbishop Salvini reported from Kushakan to the Cardinal Prefect, 17.9.1739,² in a letter full of interesting detail:

"I beg to inform your Eminence of the favours which the reigning Persian monarch has granted to this, my poor province of Nakhchiwan, because of the letter of recommendation from our lord Clement XII, whom God preserve for many years, issued on 23rd September, 1737.

"While the great Thomas Khan, who now bears the name of Wali Na'amat, leaving his conquests in Persia to be guarded by governors, was busy in beating the Indians in the territory of the Mogul, from which he has extracted incredible treasures, Monsignor Philip, Bishop of Isfahan, notified me that there had been forwarded to him the above-mentioned letter from His Holiness in favour of my province specially (my name in particular being cited in it) for presentation to this king: and that, as the latter was in far distant countries, and also because of the expenses customary in such events, he was not in a position to undertake them, but did not know what resolution to take, unless to leave it to my charge; and he added that the letter was so worded that it might be presented by anyone.

"Having received this information I communicated what Monsignor had written to me to those few Religious here, who as subjects of the country had been suffering from the impositions. They were no little gladdened by the protection and, in the hope of obtaining from it some alleviation, took counsel together as to the manner in which the letter should be promptly dispatched. They agreed to contribute 90 Tumans, i.e. about 1,000 scudi of Roman money, if anyone could be found to engage to make the journey to the territory of the Great Mogul, or wherever Wali Na'amat might be, and present him the letter. I proposed to them a man whom I knew for many years past, of a constitution strong enough to make so far and arduous a journey, prudent, courageous and with a good turn of speech. He agreed to it unwillingly, but undertook the engagement and, having made provision for it at his own expense (for the Religious would not bind themselves to give him even a penny except after his return) he left here on the 13th October last year"

¹ In it the Pope had used these words:

"Besides this We in particular fashion beg and ask Your Highness to consider especially recommended to You our venerable Brother Dominic Salvini from Laude Pompeia of the Order of Preachers of S. Dominic, Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, who, now tranquillity is restored, considering that he will be admirably served and entreated, is proceeding thither to look after his pastoral function that he may bring spiritual support to the Catholics living in Greater Armenia committed to his charge and provide for their needs, which for long past on account of the din of arms he has been unable to accomplish. . . ."

² *S.R.*, vol. 703, p. 433.

(i.e. 1738). "When he reached Isfahan, Monsignor (Philip) delivered to him the letter from His Holiness but, because at that time a rumour arose that Wali Na'amat had resigned the government to his eldest son, he considered it well to stop there until sure news of this renunciation were obtained, and in fact after a little time it was published and everyone expected the arrival" (of the Shah's son) "in Isfahan. For four months and I know not how many days the messenger was halted, waiting for this, in that city. Finally when it was known for sure that the new 'king' had fixed his residence in Mashhad, capital of the state of Khurasan, he . . . set off. On the road he met a Khan named Quli, to whom he made easy advances, offering as a gift some cubits of fine cloth and silk ribbons embroidered in gold and silver; and as a favour he begged for a letter of recommendation for Mashhad, which he obtained. . . . After his arrival in that new royal capital by means of other presents he succeeded in making friends of some gentlemen, who gave him much information and advice as to the way in which to proceed: and then he presented himself at the royal palace with a fine, mettled horse, which, he said, he was bringing as a gift for the 'king' (viceroy). There he found Allah Virdi Khan, to whom the recommendation from Quli Khan was addressed: and he, as soon as he had recognized the seal of Quli Khan, gave the messenger a cordial reception and ordered two grooms to lead the horse where the 'king' would notice it. The latter saw and liked the animal. When after that he was granted audience, according to the advice given him he presented to the 'king' the letter from His Holiness in a piece of brocade enclosed in a silver box with the seal covered with gilt.

"The 'king' at once had the letter opened but, because there was no interpreter for Latin there, no one could read it. Then the 'king' asked the messenger what the letter said: and he replied that he did not know, but forthwith drew out from his breast the translation made in Persian, saying that it had been handed to him on the supposition that there might be no interpreter. The letter was read by the 'chancellor'. The 'king' listened to the interpretation attentively, and then demanded of the messenger who was Pope Clement, and where did he live.¹ At so unexpected a question the poor man became frightened, having seen during the precious few days with what ease men were strangled: he did not lack courage, notwithstanding, and quickly replied that the Pope is the vicar of Jesus, whom the Muhammadans hold as a great prophet, and that he resides in the great city of Rome situated in Italy, that he has both a spiritual and a temporal government. In spirituals he rules over all Christians, even though such and such are rebellious, while such and such kings and princes obey him and accept his orders. . . . As to temporals he has armed troops, possesses cities, fortresses and castles. That is what he" (the messenger) "relates that he replied to the 'king', who, when he had learnt this, dismissed him from the audience. Later the grand Wazir questioned him more closely, and was satisfied with what he heard. Then it was committed to certain Mullahs, who are skilled in the laws, to write down the petitions for whatever he was asking from the 'king' in the name of the Pope. There were seven, of which five only were cited in the rescript from the 'king', viz.: (a) that the Catholics of Nakhchiwan might build and rebuild churches according to their needs; (b) that no one should dare to molest the priests or hinder them in the practice of their religion without any obstruction; (c) that whosoever it might be should respect his, the messenger's, person as being the Pope's man; (d) that the villages of the Catholics of Nakhchiwan which had paid the king's taxes should be liable to no other exactions; (e) that the Catholics of Nakhchiwan should not pay interest on the money taken by others with the object of paying the debts of the community. . . . Farman, i.e. decrees, were afterwards issued in conformity with the petitions. Finally it only remained for him to ask for the reply, and this was done with such elegance and so many handsome titles in honour of His Holiness that, if it were translated

¹ Then perhaps 25-30 years old, Riza Quli Mirza, who sixteen years previously had been merely the boy of a petty Afshar tribal chief, and since then had mainly continued to reside in Khurasan, distant from European missionaries, may well have lacked the education to know who was the Sovereign Pontiff of the Catholic world.

"into Latin with the same force and expressiveness as it stands in Persian, it would be "worth printing. . . ."¹

The Archbishop of Nakhchiwan had received this answer by the hands of this messenger back in Nakhchiwan by 22.8.1739, and proceeded to have the farmans brought to the notice of the Khan of Nakhchiwan; but as seen from Mgr Salvini's subsequent letter of 1744 the orders obtained in favour of the Catholic Armenians were of small avail, and were either followed by others in the contrary sense, or else ignored in the persecution and oppressive taxation which had overwhelmed the community by the latter date.

From Tabriz, then, on 14.4.1744 Archbishop Salvini of Nakhchiwan addressed the Cardinal Prefect:²

"The hope of seeing these few half-villages that form the body of my diocese of Nakhchiwan become re-established to some extent and inhabitable, and also the presence of "the troops of divers nations in their borders for the past two years has delayed me, and then "deprived me altogether of freedom for writing to your Eminences before now, as was my "duty. Now that I see the case is desperate, I am compelled, though to my great sorrow, "to acquaint you with it as far as I am able.

"The greater part of my people no longer possess strength to resist the shocks of twenty "years of savage warfare, and have migrated from these borders and gone to Smyrna and "its environs. Part of them have taken refuge here" (i.e. in Tabriz city), "part of them have "been killed, another part perished from starvation; and the remainder have not the means "to follow the others, but are mostly fugitives or stay hidden, as neither are they able to "support and take the place of those absent (whose names had been already registered in "the king's books in a visitation thrice repeated and could not be expunged therefore), "nor could they otherwise avoid the next carrying-off into slavery, or the sword-thrust of "some envious man. In order to escape the peril I myself too have retired to Tabriz, "which is separated from Nakhchiwan by no more than the river Araxes, although from "one place to the other there are 24 hours of travelling at an ordinary pace. In this town "(Tabriz) there are two Catholic households—there were formerly twenty-five. The "Catholic parishioners really consisted of travellers who come and go for trade: in good "times there would usually be about thirty persons.

"There is a chapel, 18 palms in width, and 36 in length,³ attached to a small House of "the Capuchin Fathers, to which is posted a certain Père Damian from Lyons (who for "the most part and at present for the past five months has been away with 'Ali Quli Khan⁴ "in the capacity of doctor), with no little assistance from the missionary Fathers in Georgia. "For this chapel I have sent for two priests of my Order from Nakhchiwan, so that they "may have the convenience of confessing to each other, and aiding, as far as possible, "these poor scattered and hidden folk . . . if I be not mistaken, there are eighteen, of "whom six refugees from Nakhchiwan . . ."

There had, before this, evidently been some conflict of limits of jurisdiction with the diocese of Isfahan:

" . . . A number of times the archbishops have appealed,⁵ lodging complaint against "the Bishop of Isfahan . . . extending his jurisdiction too far . . . when this was referred "to the Sacr. Congregation in 1692 it did not deem it well to alter the state of affairs by "making any change. However, 16.3.1739, perhaps as it appeared to the Sacr. Congrega- "tion that the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Isfahan was too vast, orders were passed 'Referred " 'for a report' . . . , but from that time no discussion has taken place . . .",

¹ No trace of the receipt of that reply from the son of Nadir Shah in Rome, or its existence in the archives there has been noted.

² *S.R.*, vol. 722, p. 204.

³ i.e. approximately 15 by 30 feet, one Roman 'palm' being 25 cm.

⁴ The nephew of Nadir Shah.

⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 708, p. 207.

according to a minute in the Secretariat of the Congregation. In his letter of 4.11.1740¹ the Bishop of Isfahan acknowledged receipt of the Cardinal Prefect's communication of 2.5.1739 and the

"final approval of the Holy Father, committing charge of the Catholic Armenians of 'Erivan and its dependencies to the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan as a provisional measure."

None the less, while obeying, Bishop Philip Mary begged to be allowed to exercise episcopal functions in that district of Erivan independently of the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan. Now, in that letter of 1744 quoted above, Archbishop Salvini went on to state that he had been for 24 years a simple priest in that region and, while the Turks were in occupation of the town, he had come to Tabriz four times to administer the Sacraments: since he had been consecrated ---i.e. in 1736---he had come to assist Père Damian during an illness of the latter without possessing any faculty, for he thought that Tabriz was part of 'Media' and totally distinct from Persia. For the past 27 years Tabriz had looked to Nakhchiwan for spiritual help in the absence of the Capuchin Fathers, whose church had been destroyed in the war:

"On my last passage through Aleppo I pressed the Father Guardian to provide a priest 'for Tabriz, and he sent Père Clement, who dispatched elsewhere later, had been succeeded 'by Père Damian. . . ."

He mentioned a little village called Kazzuk² beyond the river Araxes in the province of Erivan, quite separate from Nakhchiwan, but always looked after by the Archbishops of Nakhchiwan since there had been Catholics in Armenia: it seemed to him difficult to hold that the Bishop of Isfahan's jurisdiction was meant to cover such provinces, or more than Persia proper: only the late Mgr Barnabas Fedeli, who was consecrated by my predecessor in a village of Nakhchiwan, saw Tabriz in passing. He asked pardon if he had done wrong (i.e. by trespass of jurisdiction): and, as he remained a 'titular' archbishop, because "a shepherd "without flock or hut", he begged to be allowed to retire to Rome. Thereupon Cardinal Colonna di Sciarra had given instructions, 15.2.1745, that "after absolution" (for the wrong done) had been granted by the Pope in an audience the latter had directed:

"let the bishop of Nakhchiwan proceed as if Delegate of the Apostolic See till further orders. "In an audience of 11.7.1745 our Most Holy Father approved all the above. . . ."

Meanwhile in 1744-5 the Carmelite Bishop Philip Mary of Isfahan had been making an episcopal visitation of the northern provinces³—the first ever carried out, as far as the records disclose:

" . . . From Tabriz in the month of October last year" (1745) "I gave your Eminence "an account how, with God's help, I had made a visitation of almost all the diocese belonging "to the Bishop of Isfahan within the space of 17 months, administering the Sacrament of "Confirmation to those baptized by the missionary Fathers⁴ in the principal provinces, "i.e. Tabriz, Ganjeh, in Georgia, in Gilan. . . .

" . . . In another letter dated 27.7.1745, with which your Eminence also favoured me

¹ S.R., vol. 708.

² A minute made in the Secretariat (S.R., vol. 708, p. 207) explained that

"apart from the town of Nakhchiwan the archdiocese consisted of eight places and two hamlets, where there are convents "and churches of the Dominican Fathers, viz.: Abranar, Chahuk, Kushakan, Abrakunis, Karakush, Sapunis, Santak, "Karna, Kazzuk, the last a hamlet of 12 houses and described as within the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Nakhchi- "wan. . . . According to the Brief of Paul III . . . the Archbishop was to be elected by the eight priors of the principal "houses of the Dominicans, and by 8 principal lay-persons from the 8 chief places inhabited by Catholics, although *today* "the election falls to the Holy See, because it was ceded to it by them. . . ."

³ Bp. Philip, 28.4.1746, S.N.R., V, p. 167.

⁴ He speaks of one Capuchin Father from Bologna having been 5 years among the Imeritians

"and which I received here in Isfahan on 13.4.1746, you were pleased to inform me that "our lord the Pope and the Sacr. Congregation has committed to Mgr the Archbishop of "Nakhchiwan the spiritual superintendence of the city of Tabriz as Apostolic Delegate. "As an obedient son of Holy Church I defer to your decision in everything. But with all "that, as I have stayed there (in Tabriz) during the winter of 1744, and passed by there "again last autumn, when I administered the Holy Sacraments and performed all ecclesiastical functions necessary in accordance with the decree of the Sacr. Congregation de Prop. "Fide held in the presence of the Pope, 8.11.1632, such delegation of Monseigneur" (the archbishop) "would not appear to have been necessary, except for the fact that, as he was "in great straits in his diocese of Nakhchiwan, a province of Greater Armenia in the "kingdom of Persia, there would have been no inconvenience in his being assigned some "place of residence outside his jurisdiction under some title or other and—although in "Tabriz there are only two Catholic families—there are great numbers of other Catholic "traders who resort there and have need of spiritual assistance; and, as the French Capuchin "Fathers have a residence there and for some years past already, as Fr. Damian from "Lyons, who is the superior of it, has been with the Court, it is in need of staff, it would "be appropriate, if your Eminence so judge, that this Residence be administered by the "Fr. Prefect of the Capuchins of Georgia, for in that case it would be easier to provide "missionaries and keep up the mission, seeing that the said Monseigneur" (Archbishop) "of "Nakhchiwan left the city in question about one year and eight months ago. . . ."

The Sacr. Congregation had been troubled by the question of limits of episcopal jurisdiction and administration uselessly, for the last of the line of archbishops of Nakhchiwan had left the region. Corroboration of this is given in a letter to the Cardinal Prefect from Mgr Dominic Salvani, O.P., himself, dated from Smyrna, 11.12.1746,¹ mentioning that from Aleppo already in May 1746 he had given notice

"of my quitting Greater Armenia, and of the loss of those few semi-villages² termed the "diocese of the archbishopric of Nakhchiwan, the inhabitants having abandoned their "houses and everything they have on earth in order to save their individual selves, seeing "that the Despot," (i.e. Nadir Shah) "exasperated beyond measure on account of continual "rebellions, intends to lay waste those regions bordering Turkish territory, amongst others "that of Nakhchiwan.

"After having killed all men of position, put out those eyes that saw well and sold their "families to the soldiers, after having taken away from the community all their ploughing "animals and removed all the grain for the army, he has turned to harass the people and "fleece them with impossible taxes, which leave them as naked as worms, forcing thousands "of young men into marriage with girls by cruel beatings of the bastinado till the toe-nails "drop off, registering consent in such as did not want to marry because of differences of "inclination or of rite and religion, and then dragging them off in troops and a promiscuous "mass to Kalat on the farthest borders of Khurasan."³

"In such lamentable state are 54 of my Catholics. Therefore whosoever remained alive "after these and other tribulations has fled from Persia, the greater part of my flock taking "refuge in Smyrna and others in Thyatira, Adamish and Kanar, two days' distance away "from this port. I too arrived in Smyrna, 2.11.1746, where the Fr. Vicar Apostolic here "tells me he has forwarded a duplicate of your Eminence's letter by way of Erzerum to "Tabriz. But to escape meeting Ottoman raiding parties I stuck to the road to Baghdad, "and it did not reach me in the desert of Aleppo."

¹ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 182.

² Such had been the wastage, since even as late as 1653 the archdiocese was estimated to number 4,000 Catholics.

³ For confirmation of this forced transplantation of Catholic and other Armenians to Kalat-i-Nadiri district, see Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia's letter, 25.6.1747, to the Sacr. Cong. (*S.R.*, vol. 733, p. 429):

"Your Illustrious lordship can also write to Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan and enquire about the number of Armenian "Christians transplanted from all Persia by Shah Nadir, i.e. Quli Khan, to his province of Khurasan, these Christians "being most numerous and deprived of any spiritual aid. . . ."

Though so far away Archbishop Salvini continued to try and save this remnant of worship in Nakhchiwan, for a letter next year (22.9.1748)¹ stated that:

“the 4,000 piastres collected little by little long ago for the church at Kushakan, as also “the 1,000 piastres for that at Abranar and very necessary, are being employed on the “repair of those churches, which have the roofs fallen in partly, and the walls sagging. “God grant that they be not reduced to mud-heaps because—if they be not promptly “re-erected—the *right* to erect them may be lost and with it practice of the Catholic religion. “Our rivals” (i.e. the schismatic Armenians) “will not fail to profit by the opportunity “in this connection, as they did not succeed in doing in Nakhchiwan all the harm they “did in Julfa and Tiflis nine years ago. As regards the construction of a hospice here in “Smyrna for the accommodation of the Dominican Armenian Religious, who have “remained, two have remained, the others I sent to the province. . . .”

* * * * *

In parts of that general survey of the position of Catholics, Latins and Uniats, throughout Persia and Mesopotamia in the years 1730–48 reference occurred in some letters to hostility of the schismatics: now that the student or reader will be turning back from it to the capital of Persia and to life at Julfa in particular, he will find this fierce animosity and their persecution of Uniat compatriots flaming out afresh. To quote the *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, vol. IV (1930) on Armenia, sect. XXV and XXVI:

“In the 18th century the notables of Constantinople exercised a preponderant influence “in the election of the Katholikos. . . . It was they who had elected Lazarus of Smyrna. “While Kolot was ruling at Constantinople, the see of Echmiadzin had fallen to Abraham “of Crete” (1734–7): “he found favour in the sight of Nadir Shah, who caused him to “bless and gird on him his sword in sign of his absolute power over all the Armenians.

“His successor, Lazarus (1737–51), in order to enter into his see at Echmiadzin had to “obtain letters patent from the Sultan and from the Shah. His tussles both with the Shah “and with the Sultan were often real dramas, in which he did not by any means take up “the attitude of a martyr. Naturally he showed himself pitiless towards his subordinates, “who did not admire all his administrative measures. . . . He ordered that his former “rival, Peter Quttur, who had mocked at his megalomania, should be imprisoned and “scourged. Quttur, taking refuge at Constantinople, there denounced the injustices and “violent measures of the Katholikos. . . . At a synod held at Erivan Lazarus was declared “deposed” (1749) “and sent into confinement on the island of Sevan; while Peter Quttur “was put in his place. But soon Lazarus, having been put back on his patriarchal throne “by Ibrahim Mirza, the ‘prince’ at Tabriz, shut up his rival in a cell and let him die of “hunger in it. . . . The Catholics of Persia were at various intervals persecuted: usually “they remained true to their Faith . . . by the haughty state he kept Lazarus incurred “the rigours” (of the wrath) “of Nadir Shah, who imposed a fine of 2,500 Tumans on “him. . . . (Letter of Fr. Desvignes, S.J., Julfa, 26.5.1744).”

Over those years, 1737–51, of the Katholikos Lazarus it may be noted that the vindictive animosity was not confined to Persia proper, but can be seen at work at Baghdad and elsewhere in the letters of the Carmelites and others: action seems to have been taken on a *mot d'ordre*, everywhere. Fr. Emmanuel's report in Rome to the Sacr. Congregation of 21.9.1740² has already been quoted.

In 1737 it was a *heretic Armenian* at Baghdad who instigated the Pasha of Baghdad, who,

¹ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 254.

² *S.R.*, vol. 703, p. 417.

in order to get money from them, being Franks and Catholics, sent an armed party with officials, 25.8.1737, into the church during Mass and took off to prison the bishop and all principal native Catholics. It was the schismatics who similarly at Hamadan had the episcopal servants there beaten and fined. From Baghdad, 26.6.1737,¹ Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia informed the pro-Vicar Apostolic then in Rome:

"I wrote another letter to your Reverence . . . about the troubles in the missions in Persia, and I much doubt whether the missionaries have not been driven out of that country because of the heretic Armenians, who sent a considerable sum, more than 400 Tumans, to the son² of Wali Na'amat" (or Tahmasp Quli Khan) "who is at *Mashhad* at present, to have them turned out of Persia. . . ."

Then he went on to allude to an extraordinary action by the representative of the Czar of Russia:

"I have had news that the Vartapets have also been joined by the ambassador of Muscovy, who has instructions from his Court to have all Europeans driven out of Persia, so as to establish a monopoly of trade for his countrymen: and there is evidence of this in the insult to Monsieur Leipsick, head of the Factory of the Dutch in Isfahan, in the middle of the bazar. The latter was leaving our House in Isfahan, having been to dine with Fr. Thomas: aware of this, the Russian went to wait for him in the bazar near our House and first had him forbidden by his *shatirs* to advance and commanded to turn back. Leipsick replied that this was a 'royal' (i.e. public) road, and both might pass: on that answer he was pulled down from his horse, well beaten and robbed of a watch and gold case. I wanted to write about this to the Sacr. Congregation and inform them about this upset, and point out a method by which it might be countered, so that so many souls and Residences should not be lost—this would be by causing the chief Armenians in Julfa to understand that, if the missionaries were driven out of Persia, their (Armenian) funds in the Monti (i.e. di Pietà at Rome) would be attached, and the business of Armenians in cities of Italy sequestered. . . ."

In a letter³ of 4.11.1740 to the Cardinal Prefect, Bishop Philip Mary of Isfahan was more explicit:

"For two years past we have been subjected to constant persecution in matters of creed, stirred up by the non-Catholic patriarch of the Armenians, named Lazarus, who demanded that all the missionaries should be driven out of Persia, their churches destroyed and the Catholics perverted. While the king his father was in India, five times with this object the patriarch made overtures to the viceroy,⁴ spending much money and making many false statements as, for instance, that the missionary Fathers stopped people from paying taxes to the king, that they were disturbers of the public peace in the country, that by drawing the Armenians over to their Faith they were causing them to settle elsewhere to the harm of the state, that the Fathers were stealing away the people who had been subject to their patriarch, in order to make them vassals of the Pope . . . that they went into the houses of Christians to see their womenfolk, and other slanders of that nature, repugnant even to the infidels. When the charge had been laid before the governor of Isfahan all the statements were publicly adjudged false, after we had been taken to the tribunal on various occasions by police, and many Catholics had been put in prison and ill-used by the schismatics: the Messrs. Shariman bestirred themselves a great deal, spending money and in other ways, and it was necessary for me to incur various expenses on officials, scribes, police and on certain poor Catholics, who in the end were all released. Not content with this, the Armenians again sent to the Court a bishop and a priest with a quantity of gifts, hoping with these to suborn the viceroy in order to obtain

¹ S.N.R., IV, p. 506.

² and ⁴ Riza Quli Mirza.

³ S.R., vol. 708, p. 165.

"their object, and appealed against the decision given. When we learnt that, by spending money and through the intermediary of friends, we obtained confirmation of the former order given by the Shah for the freedom of action of the Religious, authentic copies of which I then had made and sent to divers parts, principally to Georgia, where a certain monk, dispatched thither by the patriarch, was doing all he could to lead away from the Faith the Catholics there, by having them imprisoned, bastinadoed, by preventing them from burying their dead: and I also sent to the governor of Tiflis letters of recommendation for the Fathers and Catholics which I obtained from Persians of distinction known to him. In the end the Armenians dispatched on this errand obtained as they desired, by means of money, orders for the Fathers to be expelled from Persia; but, while a priest was bringing these in triumph" (i.e. from Mashhad to Julfa) "he was killed on the road, and to this hour no one knows by whom.

"In January of *this year*,¹ as I had learnt that the Fathers at Nakhchiwan were going off to the Court in order to present a Brief from His Holiness, I sent an express messenger there so that on such an occasion something should be done in favour of the Missions: and that did not fail to have some effect.

"Seeing that his subordinates had not succeeded in gaining his perfidious object, the patriarch" (i.e. Lazarus) "went off there in person, but with all the money he spent and his efforts he could do nothing. When later he was back in Julfa, in the month of February, in a sermon he gave his benediction, he said, to those of the people who believed that our Lord Jesus Christ possessed one sole nature, and not to those who believed in two natures. In another sermon, as additional evidence of his heresy, to prove that with the death of our Redeemer His divinity had really died, he used the argument of the sun being obscured and the other signs which happened at that time. When he saw that neither by his words, nor by his actions was he inducing the Catholics to abjure their Catholic Faith, he once more dispatched two bishops to the Court in order to obtain a copy of the decree previously issued against the Fathers; and he accused the Catholics of having assassinated the priest who was bringing it and demanded blood-money, saying that the Messrs. Shariman kept their money outside the kingdom to the hurt of the Shah, and making many other charges, with the object of ruining great and small. These emissaries having returned accompanied by a police agent, on the Saturday before Palm Sunday they put in prison and bastinadoed the Catholics, of whom some became renegades and sealed a paper drawn up by the heretics, in which it was set forth that they had been seduced by the Fathers (seeking by this to authenticate their statements that the Fathers had in very truth led astray the populace) and that they promised to go no more to the Catholic churches, on pain of payment of a thousand odd hundreds of sequins to the Shah.

"And so we were suddenly summoned to the Court, I and the Father Superior of the Jesuits:² nor could we obtain that this should be put off till after Easter, the disciples of the Devil wishing in this way too to prevent the holy rites from taking place, and to force the Catholics to receive the Holy Sacraments from the heretics. On the night of Holy Thursday" (1740) "they obliged us to leave accompanied by police, who in a space of nine days made us cover 73 Persian leagues,³ which is the distance from Isfahan to the town of (illegible—Mashhad?) where the Court was staying at the time. There we were taken morning and evening to the Maidan, to await the hearing of the charges, in the midst of the rabble of soldiery and every sort of folk. There were with us one secular priest, four of the Messrs. Shariman and one other merchant, a Catholic of some standing who served me as interpreter on that occasion: and there were also there another two Catholics from Georgia, who helped us not a little. On the side of the heretics there were three bishops" (i.e. Vartapets) "together with other laymen, among them a schismatic

¹ It was in 1739, not 1740, according to Archbishop Salvini's account that he sent the Nakhchiwan emissary to the viceroy's Court.

² Presumably Fr. Arnulph Duhan.

³ Presumably the Persian 'farsakhs' are meant, viz. between 3½ and 4 miles, varying with different parts of the country: 8 farsakhs a day would be an average to good day's march: Qazwin is perhaps more likely to have been the place than Mashhad.

"brother of our interpreter, who acted as interpreter of the said bishops: and it was a matter for remark to see two brothers contend together and answer, the one contrary to the other, to the questions of the prince, which were regarding the differences in religion. He made us explain the Creed, and the principal question was that of the primacy of S. Peter and the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff, which they obstinately repudiated and we maintained. After three hours' disputing, standing in the sun, the Prince concluded by saying that, as he had sent to the Shah, his father, the letter from His Holiness together with the petition from the patriarch" (i.e. the schismatic Lazarus of Echmiadzin), "all would remain in their own faith until fresh orders, but no fresh persons might be accepted as Catholics. Immediately I had various true copies made of that order, and dispatched them to divers parts, particularly to Georgia, in order that there might be a truce to the persecution so violently excited there. I also dispatched a petition to the Shah (asking) that, notwithstanding the decree issued, we should be allowed the liberty we had always had, viz. any person whatsoever might come to our churches without being molested. The Messrs. Shariman did not spare expenditure and, having after much effort got access to the 'king', obtained another order for everyone to be free to frequent the churches and profess the Faith. On that three persons of some standing, who had handed in to the Armenian bishops that wicked paper, withdrew it, but not without difficulty, thus effacing the scandal caused: and they made to me their act of abjuration. . ."

"Another time" (i.e. later on, and after the return of the bishop to Julfa—several months later, in fact from the summer of 1740), "taken off by the same police agent to Isfahan, I was forced to go and assist in the translation which the Shah had ordered to be made into Persian of the holy Gospels, along with some other missionary in turn from each of the Orders which are here. The Quran is also being translated: and with a great deal of trouble to all concerned on account of the distance of the place—more than half a league away¹—and last summer (it was) each morning and evening, and this autumn in the morning only, but until after midday: and always we have to do the journey on foot because of the impossibility of taking a carriage. I have been obliged to incur many expenses for the reason that one and all in these countries want to be given presents: and it is very difficult to find anyone who will lend any money at all.

"The Armenian bishops and priests have also been assisting in the translation of the Gospel, which is made from the translation in Arabic of our Vulgate, which the Armenians also accept, not from any spirit of obedience or respect for Holy Church, but in order to avoid differences of translation between their Armenian version and our Vulgate. Difficulties are continually being made by the 'Turks',² and it is necessary to answer them very carefully, because they do everything they can to defeat and undermine the holy Gospel and to extract from it texts to favour the Quran and deny the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"All are apprehensive of what may be the outcome of this translation. Some say that, when the Shah has returned from the war against the Uzbek Tatars, he will summon the heads of the" (religious) "law of every creed so that they may hold a public disputation and form a new (religious) law. Others say that, as a result of repeated complaints by the schismatic Armenians against the Catholics, he has given these orders just to see what differences there are between them and set up one sole religion among the Christians: and up till now they are questioning me regarding the differences and the reasons for them, which I have to give attached in writing.

"It is now five months since I began to take part in this,³ and there is no telling when it will end. We are now at the beginning of the Gospel of S. John. However, throughout these realms the holy Gospel is being spread by this.

"When I go to the Court, it will be to my interest to take other Fathers with me, and the expense will not be light for a calamitous journey of more than forty days⁴ at a time

¹ i.e. from Julfa to the city of Isfahan.

³ i.e. since the beginning of June 1740.

² A word often used by the missionaries to mean 'Muslims' in general.

⁴ A journey of 40 days must imply to Mashhad again, not Qazwin.

"when there is such a concourse: and I ought to offer some present to the 'king' as do all the others, in particular the schismatic Armenians, who on such occasions do not omit to spend handsomely in order not to miss any likely advantage: and even the Catholics, whom they oppress . . . the Catholic party in Persia being fairly numerous and some of them to be classed as rich merchants though, on occasions when they can get out of it, they are in the habit of leaving the missionaries without support and funds.

"In such circumstances, finding myself with a number of debts . . . I have taken the liberty of drawing a bill of exchange on the Sacr. Congregation for 500 Roman scudi out of the yearly allowance which you are pleased to give me: for that is the balance of the sum which I am due to receive since my consecration (which took place on 17.6.1730): up till now I have had 400 scudi only. I have taken this sum from the Messrs. Shariman here: so will your Eminences be pleased to have payment made to their brother in Leghorn, Count David Shariman, or to whom he may wish: and of that bill of exchange I have had several copies made, whichever one of them being paid, the others will be null and void. . . . I add below, for your Eminence to see, the account of the debts incurred by me specially because of the persecution suffered, and beg the Sacr. Congregation to consent to pay them as an extraordinary charge—apart from the bill of exchange—because incurred for the holy Faith out of dire necessity. In that case I shall be able to extract myself from the embarrassment in which I now am. If you will do me this act of charity, be pleased to hand over all to Mr. David Shariman or his agent, for then it will be transferred to me here. . . .

"1739. To officials at the Court, scribes, for orders obtained, messengers	<i>scudi</i>
"sent from one place to the other	130
"1740. Cost of the journey to the Court	50
"1740. Cost of the translation of the Gospels and Scriptures	240
	<hr/>
	420"

It is rare to find in the archives of that period that appeals for unforeseen expenditure, losses and damage by wars or for repairs by the Carmelites in Persia were granted, more often than not they were minuted "nothing" in the Secretariat; but on this occasion the Congregation was evidently impressed by the possibility of an important issue being at stake, and prompt in accepting the expenditure incurred as extraordinary. In the Session of 10.7.1741 the summary of proceedings on this point reads:

"The Congregation considered that it ought to comply with the said request for an extraordinary remittance of 420 scudi to be made, but under the heading of urgent needs of that mission and without making any mention that the sum was used for the translation mentioned, in order not to give *this*¹ official approval before having in due course examined

¹ With regard to the statement in Sir John Malcolm's *History of Persia*, chap. XV:

"It has been already stated that Nadir desired to change the religion of his country. . . . Soon after his return from India he directed that the four Evangelists should be translated into Persian: and, when this work was finished in a very incorrect manner by some Romish and Armenian priests who wrote under the superintendence of his secretary, he summoned some Christian priests, Jewish rabbis and Muhammadan mullas to his presence. Extracts from the imperfect translation of the New Testament were read to him, and he amused himself and some of his hearers with ludicrous remarks on the mysterious parts of the Christian faith. The tenets of the Jews, and the traditions of the Muhammadans were treated with the same freedom, and the tyrant broke up the assembly with a declaration that, if God spared him, he would make a religion much better than any which mankind yet possessed. . . ."

It will be seen from the above letter of the Bishop, from the sequel related by Fr. Urban and other quotations from Bishop Philip Mary's letters to be read farther on, that this part of Sir J. Malcolm's tale is not substantiated and quite distorted. There was no breaking-up of the assembly, nor ludicrous remarks passed in presence of the delegates. Further the Bishop expressly contradicted that Catholic priests actually wrote the version: that was done by Muhammadan Persian scribes. It was not a translation from the Latin or a European language direct into vernacular Persian, but from an Arabic translation of the Vulgate rendered by Persian munshis (who may have been imperfectly acquainted with Arabic), as explained verbally by the Armenians and Latin missionaries. None of the parties would have been linguistic or Biblical scholars. The contemporary (1741) reserve and caution of the Roman Curia in regard to the production shows that it was not regarded as having any authority.

"it" (the translation). "This is held to be a matter of the greatest importance, because it "has been ordered by a prince, who today is the conqueror of Persia and the terror of "Asia, and it is to be surmised that he has in mind to oblige all Christians of whatsoever "religion or sect scattered over those vast regions to follow one and the same religious law "and creed (Catholic, and schismatic Armenians, Nestorians who are also called Chaldaeans, "Georgians who follow the Greek rite, and the Christians of S. John so-called because "they make S. John Baptist the author of their beliefs and rites): and, as the schismatic "Armenians are for the most part rich and powerful, in case they should incline the mind "of the monarch in their favour, the Catholic religion would remain oppressed, whereas "on the contrary the latter would establish itself all the more firmly and would spread, "were it to please God to assist the good cause with His omnipotence."

Bishop Philip Mary did not relate in any subsequent letter of his which is extant in Rome the outcome of the translations so arduously made into Persian of the Christian and Jewish scriptures, and of the Quran from its classical Arabic. But Fr. Urban of S. Elisaëus gave a detailed account of it to Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia, who used it in his book, *Secondo Viaggio*, and was himself in Baghdad at the time they took place. His account contains, interpolated, certain curious details of the history of the time which are worth note: and, as it is contemporary, first-hand information, the account given must be approximately correct.

Fr. Leander, then, explains that after his return from his Indian expedition Nadir Shah found the Uzbek Tatars in revolt and sent as commander against them his brother Ibrahim, who, however, was killed in the course of the fighting. Thereafter Nadir Shah went into winter quarters in Mazandaran:

"He perceived that he was left with few men to defend that vast monarchy, and to send "as succour . . . wherever he was asked for it, or where plunder attracted him. Causing "the soldiers to receive pay regularly and making them presents frequently therefore, not "only did he keep by him those whom he already had, but very soon he had others who "flocked from all sides spontaneously to serve him, in part attracted by the good pay, and "partly too in order to escape paying the heavy exactions and taxes, with which he burdened "his subjects. In order, too, that men of every race and sect might come the more willingly "to serve him, he showed himself indifferent to every and any religion. Having summoned "the divines of the chief creeds he ordered each one of them to make a version in modern "Persian of their scriptures, giving them to expect that he would afterwards choose that "which appeared to him the best law or creed, or else form of them combined one after "his own mind and fashion, and be himself its compiler.

"The Persian Mullahs were enjoined to translate the Quran from the Arabic, although "according to the law laid down by Muhammad any such translation was prohibited, as "he (Muhammad) wished that that . . . book should be written in the Arabic tongue "alone. . . . The Jewish rabbis were ordered to translate the Old Testament: the Armen- "ians the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of the Apostles and the Apocalypse. Lastly, "the Catholic missionaries were bidden to translate the four Gospels. He had the edict "for this published in Isfahan, where in the palace of the Khan" (i.e. governor or daruga) "all had to busy themselves with this work: and they took almost an entire year¹ to complete "it entirely. The translators of the Gospels were Monsignor Philip Mary, bishop of Isfahan, "Fr. Urban of S. Elisaëus, Vicar Provincial in that country, where he had exercised the "office of apostolic missionary for forty years and is still carrying on with unabated zeal, "Fr. Thomas Aquinas—all three of them Discalced Carmelites, but the last-named died "while the version was still being made: and Fr. Raymond Berselli of the Order of Preachers, "the Father Superior of the Jesuits having been unable to take part as he had had an "apoplectic seizure. . . ."

¹ i.e. up to nearly the beginning of June 1741.

After relating the incident of the shot being fired at Nadir Shah in Mazandaran, and his suppressing his Khurasani bodyguard for one that was composed of Armenian Christians, Fr. Leander's narrative continued:

"Then it was that the rumour spread that Quli Khan (as Europeans continued always to call him) was thinking of becoming a Christian, and that our missionaries together with the Armenians hastened to take him the translation of the New Testament, and caused the Persians to do the same with the Quran and the Jews with the Old Testament—all together, *eight months after the incident just narrated*, they arrived in Qazwin, one of the royal cities of Persia, whither he had proceeded at this time. They asked for audience of the Shah, and had it in fact in the royal gardens. Orders were given that in the meantime all these religious translators should be received, and courteously and honourably treated as guests of the Shah: and, because he had failed to do this perhaps out of carelessness or of contempt, before they were introduced to the sovereign's presence they were begged by the Chief Steward to forgive his negligence and that, should by chance the monarch enquire from them how they had been treated, they would not denounce him for paying no attention to them: and he promised in future to amend his ways, as in fact he did by giving them every attention.

"When the day appointed for the audience arrived, they were all together conducted to the gate of the garden and there, made to halt, they saw to their horror every now and then enter that gate men of all sorts, who were led before the Shah with halters round their necks and there strangled, to be afterwards dragged out like animals and their corpses thrown out in the fields for the wild beasts to eat. This spectacle lasted almost an hour, during which time eighteen were strangled.

"The Persian translators trembled, and so did the Jews, the Armenians showed some sort of courage in their looks; but our Fathers were beyond measure delighted, hoping to have attained the crown of martyrdom so much desired by them. In fine emulation they mutually encouraged each other: the controversy, truly worthy of the Apostles, which was fought out between the bishop, Mgr Philip Mary, and Fr. Urban as to which of them ought to be the first to give his life in witness to the holy Gospel deserved to have the whole world as spectator. The Bishop claimed that honour because it became him as shepherd to give the example to his flock. But Fr. Urban would not yield him precedence because, he said, being the senior of all the missionaries in Persia, he had laboured most of all in the translation: so it seemed to him that for him rather was it to give his life first, and for Monsignor to give his the last: as he was the feebler in health, he ought to take his rest before the others and, as the Bishop was the shepherd, it was his duty to look after his flock and his brethren in the Carmelite Order in order to tend them in all their needs. Those two heroes of Carmel were still engaged in that contest of courage and valour—and may I be permitted to say this in their praise, for both are already gone to the better life—when they were informed that the time had come for them to enter: and our missionaries were, in fact, placed the first in order, the Persian Mullas following them, next the Jews and last the Armenians, each of them having in the hands of their principal representative the translation in question of the books.

"At about 50 paces' distance from the monarch it was signed to them to halt, and soldiers at once came and made way for them, while on either side the officers and persons of rank at the Court took their places in the positions fitting their respective posts. Then, in accordance with Persian custom, the translators had to begin, the lowest in order the first, their salutation and so from hand to hand cause the homage and obeisance to reach the Shah. The monarch returned their greeting in the same manner and bade them welcome, communicating his replies in an undertone to the person nearest to him, and the latter to another and so on until the words came to the translators.¹ Then he

¹ Even in Muzaffar-ud-Din Shah's reign (i.e. 1906) at a reception of the Diplomatic Corps the reply to the address by the doyen was thus passed to the Shah by a young minister acting as Imperial master of the ceremonies.

"enquired from them in the same way whether they had finished their respective translations and they answered that they had completed these, and had brought them in order to have the honour of presenting them, as they then did by passing the manuscripts to him by the hands of the officials, by whose mouths they had spoken. . . .

"Having received the translations, without glancing at these he caused them to be asked whether they had been well lodged and when they replied in the affirmative he dismissed them, saying that he would notify them when he wished them to return—although they were never afterwards summoned. But he had 100 Tumans given them to divide among themselves, and they received orders to depart each to his own abode, and there remain and await any tidings. The division of the money was made in proportion to the numbers of the translators: our missionaries, three in number, had 15 Tumans: the Jews, who were four, 20: the Armenians, who were five, 25; and the Persian Mullas, who were eight, received 40.¹

"Fr. Urban, a Religious of my Order from the province of Piedmont, sent me in a letter the account of what I have related above, and gave it the title: 'Story of the Neckties missed', in allusion to the halters with which they had seen those eighteen men strangled: he thought that he too with his companions ought to have finished their lives there in order to prove by their deaths the truth of the Gospel, and displayed great displeasure at having lost so fine an opportunity of making such a happy transit from this vale of tears to the land of eternal happiness.

"I cannot say what object the Shah-in-Shah really had in wanting that translation made, and for that reason cannot judge why afterwards he failed to take any decision with regard to it. But it is very probable that, disturbed in mind by the fresh rout of his people by the Uzbaks, who killed another cousin of his, and on the other hand suspecting that the Sultan of Constantinople might be about to declare war on him in view of the fact that the latter had been reinforcing garrisons and getting armies ready at Kars and Erzerum, his thoughts turned back to the political and military government of his dominions, and he abandoned his religious ideas, to which, as it was rumoured, he had never given real attention.

"Thereupon he at once devoted himself to getting ships ready, buying some from the English, others from the Dutch and the Mahrattas, and having others still built at Bandar Abbas, i.e. Gāmbnun in the Persian Gulf. He appointed admiral of this naval armada Monsieur la Porterie, a French engineer, and had the tale spread that both by sea and by land he was intending to proceed to seize Makkeh, should the Sultan of Turkey refuse to agree that they should in turns, year by year, send the great carpet to cover the tomb of Muhammad. . . ."

Several months, and perhaps a year, before this incident of the 'cravats' or neckties, described in such lively language by Fr. Leander, Fr. Thomas Aquinas of S. Francis, then

¹ Later, more is heard of this version of the Gospels—strangely enough the Bishop seems to have been unaware that the archives of the convent at Isfahan of the translation already made about 1619 by Fr. John Thaddeus, or of any copy of that work: and back from his visitation in the north, 28.4.1746, Bishop Philip Mary informed the Cardinal Prefect (*S.N.R.*, V, p. 167):

"On this journey I had the fortune to find again the book of the translation of the holy Gospels done in Isfahan: as I informed your Eminence, the Persian 'translator' had refused to give me the copy, saying that he would not give it me without orders from the reigning monarch. I have had one copy made of it, and now here in Isfahan I am having a second made, so that in accordance with the instructions of the Sac. Congregation the book may reach Rome, and that, whether I bring it with me or send it by another opportunity, should one copy be lost, the other copies will always remain, and I am having it done by one of those scribes who were of the number of the translators and, although I have written that the translators of the holy Gospel were Persians, all the same I repeat once more that it was neither I nor the missionary Fathers who made the translation, but Persians alone from the Arabic text of the Vulgate, with the constant help, however, of the Armenians as well as of myself with some other missionary Fathers."

Then Count David Shariman from Leghorn, 29.1.1748 (*S.N.R.*, V, p. 223) notified the Cardinal Prefect that a certain Arachiel son of Paul who had proceeded from Isfahan to Smyrna, had from the latter place "forwarded to me the enclosed letter for the late Card. Petra, and also a book containing the translation of the holy Gospels in the Persian language to be sent on to the said Cardinal. . . . Your Eminence will please instruct me how to let you have the book in question. . . ." (It was dated Isfahan, 20.9.1746.) The historic, if unscientific translation definitely reached Leghorn, therefore: and it would be interesting to trace what afterwards became of it.

Vicar of Julfa, had written to the Cardinal Prefect from Isfahan, 25.4.1741,¹ expressing particular pleasure at the election of Pope Benedict XIV, whom he had known in Rome at the time when the new Pope had been created cardinal, when Fr. Thomas Aquinas himself had arrived from Naples in Rome to study in the Seminary of San Pancrazio, and giving some further information:

“By the grace of God, after so many years of warfare in Persia, one begins to breathe ‘a little, with some hope of tranquillity. Wali Na’amat, the monarch who has usurped ‘this kingdom, has already returned victorious from India, laden with the spoils taken ‘from the enemy and with treasures of immense value, having with his shrewd power there ‘subjugated that empire to his proud and upstart Persian throne. On his arrival he had ‘granted the missionaries many privileges, not only in confirmation of those ancient ones obtained ‘from his legitimate predecessors, kings of Persia, in past times, but also giving liberty to ‘any and every race to follow whichever creed it preferred. And so the seven schismatic Armenian ‘bishops in Julfa no more molest the missionaries and the Catholic people; though it is true enough ‘that but a short time ago, to the glory of the holy Roman Faith, we had all together ‘suffered insults, beatings, prison, abuse and oppression. But at present we are enjoying ‘the sweet fruits of our poor labours, and it can be seen daily how many schismatics . . . ‘return to the apostolic vineyard. . . . Among some thirty in number . . . an Englishman ‘named Master George Britten [*? sic*], a harsh and sworn enemy of our holy Faith, who ‘being in Julfa during the recent persecution which happened to the Catholics at the ‘hands of the schismatics and, observing the sufferings of the poor missionaries . . . was ‘by that reason alone led to abjure his false beliefs at our church in Julfa, and became a ‘son of the holy Roman Church, recognizing it as sole mistress of the Universe. . . . It is ‘sufficient to know that we have observed which were the true and which the feigned ‘Catholics: that for the missionaries will be a norm for the future. I can say in company ‘with our Mgr Bishop of my Order that, if there had not been the Messrs. Shariman, ‘Armenian Catholics and heads of Julfa, who by paying a great sum of money to the ‘Persian government obtained a glorious victory over our enemies, the schismatic ‘bishops’, ‘who were crying out against the poor missionaries, like real perverse Hebrews against ‘the Church—‘Tolle, tolle’—crucify, crucify, and if the missionary Fathers had been ‘expelled from Isfahan, which was the intention of our adversaries, I do not know what ‘would have happened to the innocent Catholic people. . . .”

Confirmation of the statement by Fr. Thomas Aquinas regarding the relief afforded by Nadir Shah in 1741 to the Catholic missionaries is provided in a letter of Count David Shariman brother of three of those at Julfa, written from Leghorn, 15.5.1741,² to the Cardinal Prefect when, referring to the persecution, he remarked:

“by God’s help it has been overcome to our advantage, which has been no little assisted ‘through our being well considered by Shah Nadir . . . as also their friendship with ‘principal officials at the Court, who have afforded them every protection with *Shah Nadir*, ‘who expressly gave orders to the schismatics not to trouble the Catholics, on pain of being severely ‘punished. . . .”

Nearer Echmiadzin and Armenia the persecution was not so soon checked by imperial orders, but still checked it appears to have been. The ‘physician’ of the soldier Shah, the Capuchin Fr. Damian from Lyons, was able to put to account the appreciation shown of his skill: in his letter dated “from the army of the king of Persia in the mountains of the Caucasus ‘near Darband, 21.9.1742”,³ he stated:

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 788, p. 399. He died before June 1741 according to Fr. Leander’s statement above, since the translation took about a year to complete.

² *S.N.R.*, V, p. 65.

³ *Idem*, p. 75.

"... Our (Capuchin) Fathers at Tiflis have suffered much persecution at the hands of the patriarch and of his heretical Armenian agents. I have obtained from the king three decrees, by virtue of which all the damage suffered by our Fathers is to be made good, and the Catholic Armenians are to be free, and our Order to be allowed free exercise" (of religion) "everywhere in Persia, and in particular a decree in favour of our mission at Tabriz, which gives me great privileges. At Tabriz I left in my stead Fr. Pellerin from la Mirandole: he writes that the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan had arrived and joined him on account of the disturbances there are in his diocese . . .";

while in his second letter of 22.11.1742¹ Fr. Damian added:

"... I arrived by the post at Tiflis a few days ago with officers from the Shah to have executed the orders I have brought, which are that everything taken from our Fathers be restored, and that there should be entire liberty for our religion and that whoever might want to come to our church should be free to do so, without any apprehension. I have therefore reopened our church: the Fathers are coming back, and two have already arrived. . . . The Shah has given me a fine decree for our House at Tabriz: in it he permits me to install bells. . . ."

Thus a very effectual redress seems to have been made in the case of the Capuchin Mission in Georgia, of a nature to satisfy amply the repeated demands of the Holy See; for, though Clement XI (Albani) who had so insistently championed the cause of these Capuchins and their flock was long dead, Benedict XIV (Lambertini) who then reigned, warming to the defeats inflicted on the Turks ever a plague in the eyes of Christendom, had hastened to congratulate Nadir Shah and at the same time press the rights of the Capuchins against the schismatics and relief of their flock from oppression in a Brief dated a few months earlier, 30.6.1742 (*Epist. ad Princ.*, vol. 109, p. 709—see appendix) addressed to:

"The illustrious and most puissant Tahmasp Quli Khan, king of the Persians.

"A report gathered from very delightful messages has reached Us that no less by military skill and by the invincible strength of Your armies Your Highness has smashed the ferocious Turks than by mildness and a gentle method of procedure You have won for Yourself the liking, loyalty and obedience of Your peoples.

"At so happy an event We did indeed greatly rejoice, thinking that those foes crushed by You equally most hostile to Christians and to Persians would henceforth be little burden and trouble to us, but at the same time that with the strictness of Your rule the Catholics living throughout Your widespread dominions would have fitting and decent conditions of existence. Therefore We determined to inform Your Highness of the joy experienced by Us on learning of the deeds so successfully and judiciously done by You so that, when You hear that We are well disposed towards and applaud Your success and renown, the more willingly You will attend with Your royal clemency the citizens of Our religion subjects of Your empire who, You should rest assured, rejoice with Us at this signal glory of Yours, and attracted by Your mildness but still more by the ordinances of the Christian religion remain steady in their fidelity and obedience towards You.

"As We reckon that You are wholly convinced of this, the more confidently We implore Your benevolence for the Capuchin Brothers missionaries in the kingdom of Georgia dispatched there by the Roman See to train all as are of the Catholic Faith there in piety. For hitherto exempt from taxation but now grievously burdened by it they have been brought to the utmost straits, inasmuch as, being by the rule of their Order very poor, they have not the wherewithal to pay the money for themselves. This would be enough to excite the commiseration of Your generous mind, but there is that additional fact that they have abandoned their own country with no thought of human reward,

¹ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 76.

"solely in fact intent on deserving well of Your people, in the desire to show the sure way
"to eternal happiness to whom they thus expose themselves to dangers, and do not spare
"their toil, than which charity there is nothing more potent to procure the favour of a
"magnanimous prince.

"If You will carefully turn Your mind to these matters We do not doubt but that You
"will graciously discharge the Capuchins themselves their hospices, which they have at
"Tiflis, Gori and Ganjeh, acquitted and free from every tax. . . . Given at Rome, 30th
"June 1742."

If under Persian despotism it was thus suppressed for the time being, in Turkey the malice of the schismatics was rampant in 1742. The pro-Vicar Apostolic of Baghdad was at Aleppo, 5.3.1742,¹ when he informed Rome:

"About twenty days ago I had the honour to give you the news that persecution of the
"Catholics grows from day to day in this town of Aleppo, and by my last letter to inform
"you that by a 'Khat-i-Sharif', i.e. an order written by the Sultan's hand it was forbidden
"to any Christian to profess the religion of the 'Franks', whether secretly or publicly, or
"to enter their churches, and all that under pain of confiscation of property and the most
"grievous punishments. Only in the last few days the heretic Armenians, (armed) with
"an order from the Grand Vizir, seized the two churches which the good Armenian
"Catholics possessed. The heretic bishop, who is a brother of the patriarch of Sis, the
"organizer of this oppressive measure, also presented an order to the Pasha from the Grand
"Vizir to have the Catholic bishop Jacob, some priests and the leaders of the community
"exiled. . . . The bishop with some of the priests ran away to his convent which is near
"Sidon. . . . At present this impious bishop" (i.e. the brother of the patriarch of Sis)
"insists on professions of faith which are horrible and in which he hurls anathemas against
"our holy Father Pope S. Leo and the Council of Chalcedon. Yesterday I went to our
"consul's with the missionaries to complain of this violence. . . ."

However, three months later, 30.6.1743,² Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert had better news to impart about Aleppo: after referring to the much greater mortality from plague among the schismatic than Catholic Armenians, and the belief current that this was a punishment for the persecution, he went on:

"We have learnt that the heretical patriarch of Sis is in prison in Constantinople, and
"yesterday there arrived in Aleppo an official from the Grand Vizir, bringing with him
"an order from the Grand Signor, revoking the former one which exiled the Catholic
"bishop of Aleppo and 11 persons, priests and laymen, leaders of the Catholic community.
"These good Catholics, having recovered their liberty, can work and in a short time they
"will recover, with the help of God I hope, the two churches. Their zeal is such that they
"will make no difficulty about selling everything to gain this. . . ."

From Julfa, 29.5.1745,³ while Bishop Philip Mary was still absent on his visitation of the northern provinces, Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret informed the Cardinal Prefect:

". . . Yesterday I received sure news that the patriarch⁴ of these waspish heretics, that
"same man who some years ago gave us such great trouble, asserting that he would drink
"(our) blood, recently went to the Shah with some intention of opposing us; but God
"willed it that he did not have much success, since the Shah said to him: 'Now I know
"you to be a rogue, a liar, a deceiver, and a thief.' Then he had his (the patriarch's)

¹ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 76.

² *Idem*, p. 86.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 729.

⁴ This was the supreme patriarch or Katholikos of the schismatic Armenians, Lazarus, at Echmiadzin.

"beard and ears cut off, and deposed him from his patriarchate, making patriarch another man.¹ They write that he will continue to be in chains and to be beaten until he has "paid 5,000 Tumans (rate 1 Tuman=16 scudi) and further given the Shah himself the "income from the revenue of his patriarchate for a whole year. The magistrate here in "Julfa who is also a great heretic and enemy of ours, and who in past times has given us so "much trouble, continues in prison also, and bastinadoed, until he pay the Shah 3,000 "Tumans.

"All this keeps the heretics very humble, together with the knowledge that *the Shah* "has recently confirmed all the privileges we possessed from Shahs in the past, together with "complete liberty to carry on our missions freely, to build churches, without any person "whatever being able to say a word. The other day in fact, as it happened that we had "to carry the Communion to a new Catholic, who was sick in a household of heretics, we "carried it with all solemnity, under the great canopy, with acolytes, thurifiers, a quantity "of lighted candles and singing, ringing the little bell, etc., as is the custom in this "country. . . . I am much pleased that His Holiness Benedict XIII has ordained that "Mgr Emmanuel Balliet, Bishop of Baghdad, shall make the orientals follow their own "rites in all their rigour: here at Julfa too there is a great abuse over that, which causes "scandal."

For the rest of Nadir Shah's reign, notwithstanding his oppressive measures in general, in Persia nothing further has been observed of any persecution of the Armenian Uniats by the schismatics. Life at Julfa settled for a brief period to what was perhaps the time of greatest expansion for the Catholics of Julfa in all the three centuries of their occupation of the town. The *Secondo Viaggio* of Fr. Leander of S. Cecilia, who saw it in 1736-7, depicts the general Christian position in attractive terms:

"In Isfahan there are three convents, two of which are very fine—one of them of the "Portuguese Augustinians, and the other is ours, both of them altogether perfect, and the "churches have nothing to envy in those of Europe, being also provided with towers and "bells. They do not lack their very, very beautiful gardens, abounding in fruit: and that "of our Fathers has also a grove of elm trees. The Capuchins are in the new perimeter "made by the Afghan king" (i.e. when Shah Ashraf in 1727 enclosed one-eighth of the old city within new walls); "but the site is very narrow and the situation bad. *Christians* "may not lodge in the city, except foreign merchants who stay in the caravansarai.

"Julfa, rather than a suburb, is almost a town separate from Isfahan: only Armenians "reside there, though there are three convents: the first of the Dominican Fathers, the "second of the Jesuits, the third ours: and from the last-mentioned as far as that of the "Fathers of the Company, watch in hand and without stopping, I have counted it to be "half-an-hour along the streets. The Dominicans are in the middle, but we are not at "the beginning" (of the town) "and the Jesuits not right at the end—from that the length "of this town can be concluded.

"There are 24 [*? sic*] churches of the schismatic Armenians and four Catholic churches. "There is also a convent of none but Armenian bishops (called Vartapets) and one monas- "tery of non-cloistered nuns. On the day of Corpus Christi we had the procession of the "Blessed Sacrament in the cloister and garden of the Jesuit Fathers, whose church is newly "built in the Roman style—with its small choirs—and painted and adorned with stucco "work. . . ."

Undated (but probably of 1746, from the internal evidence afforded by the length of service as missionaries of the Carmelites named, and years since the bishop's consecration) and of historical value are two lengthy documents in Latin,² marked 'Replies to the questionnaire

¹ If this refers to Quttur, then the date 1749 given by *Dict. de Geogr. Eccles.* for him as anti-patriarch is 4 years too late.

² *S.N.R.*, V, p. 360, and *S.N.R.*, VI, prior to p. 71.

'of your Eminence', and 'Answers to certain questions of the Sacr. Congregation', penned and signed by Fr. Arnulphus François Duhan, S.J. The information of the two combined reads, under various heads:

"There are nine places at which missionaries are wont to reside: Tiflis, Ganjeh, Gori (Georgia and Caucasia): Rasht (Gilan), Tabriz: Hamadan, Shiraz, Bushire, Bandar " 'Abbas: all in the diocese of Isfahan.

"In the city of Isfahan there are only three churches of the missionary Fathers, i.e. the 'Augustinians, Discalced Carmelites, and Capuchins: none of the schismatics.

"*Specification of the dedication of each church:*

"Augustinians. Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"Carmelites. Our Lady of Carmel.

"Capuchins. The Epiphany.

"In Julfa likewise there are three churches of the Fathers, i.e. of the Jesuits which is the "most ancient, of the Dominicans and of the Carmelites. There is a fourth, i.e. of the "Armenian Catholics. There are no Catholic churches outside the walls.

"*Specification of the dedication:*

"Jesuits. S. Joseph.

"Dominicans. Our Lady of the Rosary.

"Carmelites. Our Lady of Carmel.

"Fourth church. Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.¹

"In the Convent of the Carmelites in Isfahan—Bishop Philip Malachisi resides, 29 years

"in the missions,

"in the Convent of the Augustinians in Isfahan . . . one Father only, Fr. Francis of

"S. Augustine, an old man and infirm, 29 years in the missions; these are not

"properly missionaries, but sent by the Viceroy of Portugal in Goa as consuls.

"The Convent of Capuchins in Isfahan is now abandoned, but I have heard that their

"Father Guardian will send another missionary.²

"There are at Julfa:

"Dominicans: Fr. Raymond Berselli, 25 years in the missions (Fr. Arcangelo Ferri "having very recently died).

"Carmelites: Vicar Provincial, Fr. Urban of S. Elisaeus, 30 years in the missions:

"Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret, 5 years in the missions.

"Jesuits: Fr. Arnulph. Francis Duhan, 26 years in the missions: Fr. Michel Raymond

"Desvignes, 9 years in missions.³

"There are two native secular priests, who studied Moral Philosophy here, one ordained "by Bishop Barnabas who on account of his Catholic Faith was nailed once by his ear to a "post in the Maidan of Julfa, and he is tolerably well versed in disputation: the other or- "dained by Bishop Philip. Though results do not answer correspondingly there is sufficient "work in the Catholic community which would certainly perish if there were no missionaries. "The small number of the latter does not permit them to be idle in the place of their "residence, nor does it allow them to be absent from the missions. If they were to make "excursions into the villages (which certainly lack instruction), this would create great "resentment in the minds of those" (i.e. schismatic priests) "who live in those villages and "consider them theirs, and they would stir up a great persecution. For about 20-30 years "the state of religion is almost the same in all places, although the Catholics are many "more than formerly. No money is received save small payments for Masses. . . ."

¹ The Superior of the Lazarist Fathers, Père Jean Galaup, Julfa, commented on this, 15.6.1933:

"Les précisions données permettent de situer . . . le couvent des Dominicains se trouve être notre Résidence actuelle "avec l'église. Le jardin des Carmes à l'entrée de Djoulfa. . . ."

² See *Cont. Basra Chron.*, on 4.5.1752: "Fr. Hermengild, a Capuchin, sent for Isfahan by his superiors, arrived at Basra "but, finding here that their mission there had been ruined, on 4.8.1752 proceeded to India."

³ The student, noting that five out of the seven named are men past middle age and full activity, marvels why the Orders in Europe did not send out young blood to replace and assist them, when the Catholic position at Julfa was so much stronger and numbers greater than ever before.

Schismatics

"In the large monastery at Julfa there are twenty priests, and twenty other persons in the service of the monastery: in the small monastery three priests only.

"The other churches, to the number of 21, belong to the schismatics, of which the titles (dedications) are:

(Note by the Rev. Fr. Jean Galaup, Superior of Lazarist Fathers, Julfa, 15.6.1933):

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| "1. The large monastery for men—The Saviour | "exists today" |
| "2. the small monastery for men—S. Sergius | "exists today" |
| "3. the convent for women. S. Catharine | "exists today" |
| "4. Mother of God | |
| "5. S. Gregory the Illuminator | |
| "6. S. John Baptist | "exists today" |
| "7. S. James | "exists today" |
| "8. a second dedicated to the Mother of God | "exists today" |
| "The rest do not have titles, but are (known by) the places in which they are situated, or by the name of him by whom they were built. | |
| "9. Called 'church of the Maidan-i-Buzurg' | |
| "10. Murad | |
| "11. Pranchini ¹ | |
| "12. Kissutasnag | |
| "13. Carameliki | |
| "14. Kodjenti | |
| "15. Portuveni | |
| "16. Kotchieveni | |
| "17. Carakielens | "exists today" |
| "18. Tarvisii (? Tauris, Tabriz) | "exists today" |
| "19. Chevellens | |
| "20. Chafrasens | |
| "21. Erivani | "exists today" |
| "22. Maidan-i-Kaki ² | |

"No church is built of stone but, as is the custom, of mud and plaster covered with baked bricks, or wood.

"There are also at Isfahan four valleys which formerly, and in the time of Shah 'Abbas, had many villages, each village its church:

The valley of Piria had 21 villages

" " Bulvari " 17 "

" " Ganduman " 12 "

" " Linjand " 9 "

"Certain of them now exist, the rest by *force majeure* of the 'Turks', by apostasy, by lack of inhabitants, by the carelessness of the parties fell into ruin."

(Note by Rev. Fr. Galaup, 14.2.1935):

"Piria doit avoir (1935) 20 villages habités uniquement par les Arméniens: et 7 villages habités partie par des Arméniens et partie par des Mussulmans. Boulvari compterait 20 villages, mais la plupart sont mélangés de Mussulmans. Linjand-elle existe toujours, mais je crois qu'il n'y a plus d'Arméniens. Ganduman je ne la connais pas; je ne serais pas sûr pris qu'on veuille désigner *Chahar Mahal* qui compte actuellement 14 villages Arméniens."

¹ The writing in the manuscript in this and the following names is not easy to read: and the spelling is in Latin by a Frenchman and perhaps words are wrongly copied

² The Rev. Fr. Galaup added: "Trois autres églises existent, S. Nerses, S. Stephen, and S. George. Elles devaient sans doute exister en 1720, mais porter un autre nom."

After his journey of visitation in Azarbaijan Bishop Philip Mary had intended, and perhaps hoped, to proceed to Rome *ad limina*, having reached the limit of ten years in his episcopate; however, he

“received a letter from the Sacr. Congregation (telling him) to remain in Persia: so he has “already resigned himself to the Divine will . . .”,¹

sad perhaps that he was thus deprived of an opportunity to see again his homeland. Allusion has been made to Nadir Shah having Catholics and other Armenian inhabitants of the province of Nakhchiwan transplanted to Kalat-i-Nadiri: there is a minute in the secretariat de Propaganda Fide:²

“The reigning monarch having sent many Catholic families to Mashhad, more than 30 “days’ journey away, as it were in exile, to provide for the spiritual needs of those who “were asking for it he” (Bishop Philip Mary) “dispatched there at his own expense two “Religious, and paid for their return. . . .”

However, shortly after the period covered by the reign of Nadir Shah there passed to the other life and his reward this, perhaps the most lovable figure in the history of the bishops of Isfahan for his simplicity of life, his poverty (as shown by his worn and meagre possessions at his death), his pastoral care in visiting distant provinces of the diocese, which no predecessor had done, his suffering and privations through many years of war and persecution and privation, his courage in remaining at his post, and the charity of his disposition displayed in his writings.

A letter from the Vicar of Julfa, his successor, Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret, dated 15.12.1749,³ notified the Cardinal Prefect of the

“general and great loss we have all had in the death of our good shepherd, Mgr Philip “Mary, . . . which happened on 13.8.(1749) . . . bitterly and immensely mourned by “all. . . .

“I have made a faithful inventory⁴ of what I found belonging to the late, saintly bishop “. . . as the sale would not have brought in sufficient to pay his debts wholly . . . I “asked Count Peter Leopold Shariman, brother of Count David, dwelling in Leghorn . . . “to lend me 100 Roman scudi. . . . The late Monsignor left no vicar-general by letters “patent, because his strength failed him all of a sudden, except that of his tongue, which “failed him four hours before his death: before losing his speech, in the presence of Count “Peter Leopold Shariman and other Religious and laymen verbally he laid it on me to “act for him, and to write at once to Rome, so that the Sacr. Congregation may have “thought for a successor . . . on which he spoke no more, and began to recite the ‘Clamavi “‘in toto corde meo, exaudi me, Domine’ and other Psalms till he fell into the death-agony. “As one of the two Dominican Fathers here in Julfa has died a septuagenarian, and the “other remains alone, a sexagenarian, tortured with gout, the late bishop laid it as an “obligation on me to write to your Eminence to arrange for him to have a companion, as “the deceased prelate had several times written to the Sacr. Congregation. . . .”

The letter concluded by mentioning other behests of the dying bishop in favour of those Sharimans still in Julfa, that their brothers in Leghorn and Venice be moved to assist them in their financial difficulties for the sake of the Catholic position in Julfa, to which the family

¹ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 201, Fr. Sebastian, 16.8.1747.

² *S.R.*, vol. 756, p. 22.

³ *Idem*, vol. 747, p. 89.

⁴ Among the articles were

“one book of the Gospels in Persian” (the second copy made, presumably), “two sorts of miserable rugs, here called “*gilims*, two coverlets and no more because he slept always on the ground, with one of these rugs and one coverlet under “him, and the other one over him, and in winter the other rug. . . . Money found after his death—3 rupees, distributed “to the poor on the day of his death. . . .”

still in 1747 contributed so much: and also for a certain 'privilege' in trade to be obtained for them from the king of Spain.

After his death sore trouble was caused by his having drawn on the Sacr. Congregation for his usual allowance through an Armenian in Venice: and, the amount being disallowed as in excess of the correct figure by the secretariat of the Congregation, the Armenian threatened through his relatives in Julfa to have summary justice done on the other Carmelites in Julfa. It is not clear that all the pleading of the heavy expenses Bishop Philip Mary had sustained in his journeys was accepted in Rome as warranting a special grant in aid: in that period of administration there appears to have been little elasticity for inevitable expenditure and war depredations.

* * * * * *

Those references in the letter of the Shah's physician, the Capuchin Fr. Damian from Isfahan, 22.11.1742, "the king is due to turn his might against the Turks", and in the Carmelite Fr. Leander's book, *Secondo Viaggio*, to the Sultan of Turkey reinforcing the frontier garrisons at Kars and Erzerum, and to Nadir Shah, after his campaign in the Caucasus of 1742, making preparations for a declaration of war, amongst others by buying and building sailing vessels in the Persian Gulf proved to be, as it were, the small clouds on the horizon which soon were to become heavy with war over the western marches of Persia. Daring exponent of attack that he was the Persian autocrat struck first: even by September 1742 he had planned it, down to the very month (*vide* the letter of Fr. Damian:

"with the army in the mountains above Darband. . . . In the month of *March* the king
"will turn his arms against Baghdad. . . .")

From Aleppo, 30.6.1743,¹ Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert wrote:

"By letters" (of 7.5.1743) "from Baghdad, and by those from the French consul at
"Basra dated 21.5.1743, we have had news that shortly the city of Baghdad will be besieged
"by Quli Khan: that the scarcity there is already so great that famine was feared before
"long, and indeed various Pashas have had instructions from the Ottoman Porte to leave,"
(for Baghdad) "as we hear from letters from Constantinople which arrived ten days ago:
"the Pashas of Damascus, Aleppo, Adana and others are already out on campaign to
"march on Persia to the succour of Baghdad, and here in Aleppo one sees nothing else but
"soldiers and munitions of war. . . ."

Simultaneously Mausil in the far north, and the river port of Basra were attacked. In a rhetorical vein, *Cont. Basra Chron.*² for the year 1743 relates:

"By the orders of Nadir Shah, alias Tahmasp Quli Khan, who at that time was besieging
"the town called Mausil³ with innumerable forces of soldiers, the Persians laid siege to
"this town (Basra) on 25.8.(1740). . . . 'Is this that town?'—the reader in every age will
"rightly exclaim—'is this that town which, though hardly fortified by mud ramparts and
"destitute of any weapons and garrison, without any soldiery, without discipline, more
"by making a noise than by fighting for three months and thirteen days offered resistance
"to a force of 30,000 Persians, not counting the three [*sic*] very powerful tribes of the

¹ S.N.R., V, p. 86.

² Folio 39.

³ While calling at Rhodes on his way to Malta Fr Emmanuel (letter of 14.11.1743) had an interview with the last Grand Vizir but one, in exile there, who stated he "had freshly received news that the town of Kirkuk had been taken by Quli Khan, Khan Nadir. . . ." ". . . There was general consternation in Mardin, Diarbahr," etc., he added in a letter of 13.11.1743.

"Muntafiq and Bani Lam, which had joined the Persians in lusting for the utter destruction 'of that town!' It is almost incredible to relate, nor will it ever be understood how it did 'not fall at the first attack.¹ Yet it held out, and the indefatigable exertions of the Mutasallim of that time (Rustam Agha), and of Musa Pasha in Minawi, frustrated all attempts 'by the enemy to obtain any lodgment, except in one small fort on the opposite bank of 'the river. Three cannon-balls fell into our (Carmelite) hospice, but none on the church: 'one blazing one fell on our (Carmelite) guest-house (caravansarai), but the damage was 'made good at the cost of a mere 20 mahmudi' (=40 shahi=2 rial in modern exchange).

"At length, 8.12.1743, to universal rejoicing two messengers arrived—one a Turk, the 'other a Persian—reporting that a covenant of peace had been made between Nadir Shah 'and Ahmad Pasha, so on both sides hostilities ceased: the gates of the town were opened, 'and after some days the Persian army took itself back to Persia. We did not know what 'were the terms' (of peace) 'but only heard afterwards that the principal commander of 'the Persian army ended his life near the town of Mashhad, whither he had fled, in punish- 'ment for the unsatisfactory outcome of the war, being beheaded by order of the Shah. . . ."

As a sequel to this brief campaign and the armistice some details may be quoted from an enclosure to a letter of the new Bishop of Baghdad, written from Malta, 25.4.1744, viz. a communication from the French ambassador in Constantinople to the Grand Master of the Knights in Malta:

"News from Constantinople, 2.3.1744,

"After the siege of Mausil was raised, the son² of Thomas Kuli K(h)an had been 'blockading the city of Baghdad. Thomas Kuli K(h)an himself was encamped at Altun 'Su, where there is the 'golden river' between Baghdad and Kirkuk. It was there the 'Kiaya³ of Ahmad Pasha went to discharge the commission with which the Porte had 'entrusted him on the journey he made to Constantinople last October. The result of 'those negotiations was that Thomas Kuli K(h)an decided to retrace his steps to Persia 'after having arranged with Ahmad Pasha about a plan for peace, the governor of Baghdad 'leaving this for approval by the Porte. He dispatched his Kiaya once more to the Porte 'in the month of December last (1743). Thomas Kuli K(h)an, who *has declared himself a 'Sunni*, and a true Muhammadan, did not want to return to Persia without making a 'pilgrimage to four mosques, of which two are a quarter of a league from Baghdad.⁴ 'From where he was he sent his 'Itimad-ud-Dauleh, i.e. chief minister, to pay a visit to 'Ahmad Pasha, who received him at the door of his haram ('andarun'), embraced him, 'made him a gift of three fine horses richly caparisoned, and said in a tone loud enough to be 'heard by everyone: 'It is not men, it is God who has arranged this interview by changing

¹ Whereas at the time of the previous attempt by the Persians to seize Basra (in 1733) it had been Mr. French, Resident for the East India Company, who was regarded and fêted by the Turks as the saviour of the town, on this occasion *Cont. Basra Chron.* has a piquant story in the opposite vein to tell of his successor, Mr. Darell:

"At the time of the siege the English Resident, Mr. Darell, retained in his house a quantity of wheat and barley 'contrary to the order of the Mutasallim that grain was to be sold publicly in the Maidan: further, on the arrival of 'the Persians he dressed his servants in Persian fashion, and it was also rumoured that he had received letters from the 'leaders of the Persian force: for those reasons all the Janissaries there were to be found broke out in a demonstration 'against him (accusing him) as a partisan of the enemy, and they settled to kill him in his own house. No sooner had 'this been found out than the Mutasallim, Rustam Agha, was at pains to soothe the tempers of the angry men, and to 'make them abandon the plot they had made, and, so as to protect him the more safely, *for the whole of the time of the siege* 'he kept the English Resident under guard in his house. . . . Taking the good deed as an insult, and wrongly construing 'the guard placed over him by the Mutasallim, perhaps instigated by the advice of courtiers hostile to the governor, ' . . . at the beginning of May (1744) the English Resident, attended by several servants, surreptitiously betook himself 'to Baghdad, where, being received with profuse signs of honour by Ahmad Pasha, he asked for the removal of Rustam 'Agha. . . . During the time of his detention no one went near him: our Fathers alone went to see him repeatedly, 'and he received their friendly offices in so grateful a spirit that, abandoning his former spleen, he not only restored us 'to his erstwhile goodwill, but gave us confirmation of it by many evidences of generosity. . . ."

² Perhaps Nasrullah Mirza, or "Nazar 'Ali Mirza," as the Capuchin Fr. Damian, who as physician to the royal family ought to have accurately known, calls him.

³ *Kahaya* or *kiaya*, properly 'steward'—perhaps here 'factotum' or Nazir, as in Persia, but often acting as deputy governor in fact.

⁴ The shrine of Kadhmain is perhaps meant.

“the minds of our sovereigns, yours and mine.” ‘Itimad-ud-Dauleh remained at the place for 24 hours, during which he had two secret conversations with Ahmad Pasha. On his return from the mosque at Mashhad-i-’Ali” (i.e. Najaf) “Thomas Kuli K(h)an passed, 13.12.1743, at some distance from Baghdad on his way back to Persia. According to the previous information he was at Tepe Dagħ: according to the latest he is at Erivan [?] sic]: in his retirement he has relinquished the places and hamlets which he had won from the Turks: and on 19.12.1743 they wrote from Baghdad that the officers who were to go and take possession in the name of the Grand Signor (the Sultan) were already nominated, and had left. On 23.1.1744 this unexpected development and event was learnt at Constantinople, and at first much joy was manifested, because of the uneasiness in which people were over the city of Baghdad; the Kiaya of Ahmad Pasha, who had been halted at Nicomedia, whence he sent the dispatches, only on 10.2.1744 received permission to go on to Constantinople. On 14.2.1744 the Kiplas Agha, who had been much troubled by gout, reappeared in public and accompanied the Grand Signor to the mosque: afterwards he had several talks with the Kiaya of Ahmad Pasha. Various councils were held and finally in the Diwan, or general assembly, assembled 25.2.1744, it was decided to *reject the proposed peace as being contrary to the Law*” (i.e. Quran) *“especially with regard to the claim of Thomas Kuli K(h)an to be allowed to send the Persian pilgrims direct to Makkeh under the leadership of a separate and independent Amir-ul-Haj:*¹ so that preparations for war are being continued and they have even already sent off considerable sums of money for the Shah Safi² by three different caravans independently of a quantity of woven tissues, jewels and diamonds, which were sent to him apparently to please those Persian lords who go over to his” (the Safawi’s) “party. Ahmad Pasha, formerly Grand Vizir, has been appointed Sar-askar (commander-in-chief) of the Ottoman troops. He has orders to try to penetrate into Persia along with Shah Safi. The 6,000 Turks whom the Kapiji Bashi Sar-aslan has gone to raise in the Crimea will be transported by sea to Trebizond. It has also been decided to arm a fleet of eight vessels, some galleys and several brigantines to go and convoy the troops and munitions of war, and land them at Trebizond. . . .”

It was undoubtedly to that invasion and the insurrection planned to accompany it that Bishop Emmanuel Ballyet referred in his letter from Aleppo of 25.4.1744:³

“Tahmasp Quli Khan has withdrawn in order to proceed in the direction of Erivan, a town of Greater Armenia, in order to oppose the new pretender to his throne⁴ who threatens to invade the country, as you will see better in a sheet of news which has been freshly received from Constantinople. . . .”

It must have been following that expedition that the Catholics and other Christians of Nakhchiwan province suffered that drastic treatment so poignantly described by Archbishop Salvini in his letter of 11.12.1746 already quoted:

“exasperated beyond measure on account of the continual rebellions, the Despot intends to lay waste those regions bordering Turkish territory⁵ amongst others that of Nakhchiwan . . .”:

and that the transplantation of Christians to Khurasan took place. Next year, 29.5.1745,⁶ the Carmelite Fr. Sebastian from Julfa, after mentioning that the Shah of Persia, had had himself called the ‘Just King’, added:

¹ The official marshal of the pilgrim caravan

² Which Safawi prince was this in 1744? Safi, eldest son of Shah Sultan Husam?

³ S.N.R., V, p. 129.

⁴ No doubt the ‘Shah Safi’ mentioned.

⁵ A letter of Bishop Philip Mary, 28.4.1746, explained to Rome: “In the region of Tabriz there are 4 viceroys, who are called Baiglarbagis, i.e. one for Tabriz, who has various towns in his district, one for Erivan, one for Shirwan, the last for ‘Ganjeh, under whom is the province of Nakhchiwan. . . .”

⁶ S.R., vol. 729.

"It is said that he will return to attack Baghdad. He has had the eyes of one of his 'ministers of state put out, and fined him 6,000 Tumans. . . ."

That attack presumably did not materialize: at any rate the Bishop of Baghdad on 21.11.1746¹ informed the Cardinal Prefect:

"As to news from Persia, everything is quiet, peace having been made with the Turks. 'The king of Persia, Shah Nadir, has left for Kandahar to suppress a fresh rebellion; but 'many believe it to be a feint to get near India in order to undertake a second invasion; 'though it is doubtful whether it would succeed like the first one. . . ."

It was not in Kandahar, but in Sistan that Nadir Shah had to face further rebellion: and two months later than the Bishop of Baghdad wrote that he actually set out from Isfahan. Before that, however, the cause and force of those frequent revolts and outbreaks is to be read in a 'Narrative', evidently compiled in Venice or Leghorn from letters or verbal statements emanating from residents of Julfa. It is obvious that only in a limited part of the empire was he given allegiance as Shah by men's hearts and lips: over a vast part they thought and spoke of him to the end of his career as 'Quli Khan'. The 'melancholy, the black humours' treated by his Capuchin physician in 1742 had developed into homicidal mania in its most extreme form—a lust for killing: alongside of it extortion was used cruelly, recklessly. This circumstantial, dated account² is headed:

"Narrative of the deplorable condition in which at present are the Armenians of Julfa 'owing to the recent arrival in Isfahan of Tahmasp Quli Khan, the Tyrant of Persia, 'according to information received thence."

"It was . . . two years ago, i.e. 28.12.1745, the first time³ that the tyrant entered Isfahan 'after he had usurped the crown of Persia: it was the day of the (Holy) Innocents, and 'indeed that second Herod, more cruel than the first, without putting it off for a moment, 'on the very day of his entry at once opened the courts of his injustice, in which he alone 'sat as accuser, witness and judge, avarice serving as his counsel, tyranny as his authorities, 'his own arbitrary will as the law. He at once began the horrible butchery by having 'slaughtered under various pretexts a quantity of the chief persons of the country, among 'the principal of whom were the governor of Isfahan and the mayor of Julfa, commonly 'called the 'Kalantar'. It was a sight to see in all parts of the city, and especially in the 'great Maidan (square) numbers of people of every grade tortured by the royal officials 'in order to extract money from them in accordance with the orders of the tyrant. To 'cut off noses, ears, put out eyes, mutilate members, to make all the toe-nails drop off 'under blows of the bastinado—these were ordinary affairs, from which the more prominent 'personages of the Court and even the chief officers of the royal army were not exempt. . . .

"So it began and so it continued until his departure from Isfahan for Mashhad, which 'was at the beginning of the following year (1746), while he left in addition various fines 'for large sums of money to be paid both by the city and by Julfa within the space of some 'months.

"But the Armenian gentlemen at Julfa having learnt that the Tyrant was due to return 'to Isfahan at the end of that year, taught by what they had seen and experienced on the 'occasion of his first visit, many of them as a precaution got away their children out of the 'country, sending them by various caravans to Basra, Baghdad or other parts. This good 'fortune, allowed to the sons of the rich, was not granted either to the parents obliged to 'remain there to answer for any contingency, nor to the women, especially those married

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 733, p. 430, and *S.N.R.*, V, p. 180.

² *S.N.R.*, V, p. 260.

³ Hardly correct, judging by the diary of the East India Company, quoted previously in this chapter.

"who had to stop there, so that by doing so they should compel their husbands, who were outside, to return to Isfahan.

"The Messrs. Shariman, an Armenian family well known both by their illustrious relatives who live in Europe and have the title of 'Count', and for their great riches which they have placed in the hands of various agents of theirs in all parts of the world, and much more by their great attachment and zeal which they have always shown in defending and maintaining in Persia the Catholic Faith and the missionaries, also succeeded in getting their children away from Persia before the return of the Shah. Messrs. Leo and Peter, both brothers of Count David living in Leghorn, themselves tried to do the same on the occasion of a caravan leaving for Basra; but their flight being discovered by the governor of the city and Kalantar of Julfa, the latter sent armed men after them, who brought them back to Julfa, to their great misfortune, because they were afterwards obliged to suffer great tribulations, as we shall now tell.

"The 14th December of last year, 1746, then, was the day on which the barbarous Quli Khan returned to Isfahan. He made his entry with no other escort than that of his guards and soldiers, having declined to permit the heads of the city and of Julfa to go out and meet him, and having on the contrary had a ban published of the death penalty for whosoever should be found on the road by which he was to pass. The Europeans alone, i.e. Messrs. Pearson and Bland, Englishmen, and Mynheer Bentquem, Agent of the Dutch Company in Isfahan, had permission to make their bows to him from a distance, and to follow him as far as the Royal Palace, where they were later admitted to an audience with him, which consisted in no other ceremonies than in acceptance of the valuable gifts the gentlemen in question made to him, in exchange for which he had given to each one of them a coat of gold and silver brocade after the Persian style.

"Then the first order he gave was to send to all houses in the city and district of Isfahan and Julfa a quantity of royal tax-gatherers to extract money out of the stones, so to speak: so that it is said that in the whole time of this second visit and stay in Isfahan, which was for 5 weeks, he had extracted from the city and its villages more than 300,000 Tumans; and to find so much money in a place already ruined, what efforts must the tax-collectors and officers of the Tyrant not have made! Every day they killed under the bastinado a quantity of people, and sticks not being sufficient in the end they used irons and stakes hardened in the fire, without regard either to the sex or to the status of the person: men, women, poor and rich, old people and children, they took them all and put them under the pole, either to make them give money or, if the persons did not have any, denounce those who had it. To satisfy the avarice of the insatiable Tyrant, in exchange" (for money) there were put up for auction whatever women's ornaments, furniture, utensils, etc., were to be found in the houses: and, because for want of money it was difficult to find anyone to buy these, in order to make purchase easy the poor wretches were obliged to sell them to the very soldiers and servants of the barbarian usurper: the best gold at 4 'abbasi a mithqal: silver at 2 bisti: 1 batman-i-Shah of copper at 2 'abbasi: and so on the other things proportionately.¹ But because despite all these efforts they still remained powerless to acquit themselves entirely of such great imposts, they were at last obliged to sell their own offspring at such low prices that a child of 12 years was being sold for 10 mahmudi, a girl of the same age for 5 mahmudi—a thing unbelievable, but true and as true as it is at present in almost all Persia.

"The share which on this occasion fell to be paid by the Armenians of Julfa it is not yet known to what sum it amounted precisely. Letters from private persons state that Julfa for its portion paid about 30,000 Tumans, i.e. 13,000 Tumans of it for a certain rice, which the year before the Tyrant left them to sell, three parts of which were not to be found and the other quarter remaining they had been unable to finish selling. The balance of that sum was for other impositions, and payments and gifts made to the tax-

¹ In margin of original MSS. The 'abbasi of Persia = 1 livre in France: the bisti = 2½ soldi: 1 batman-i-Shah is a weight of 16 lb. of 12 ounces (the batman-i-Shah of the 1900's being 13 lb. avoirdupois).

"gatherers and officials of the barbarians to render them a little milder. In order to meet "such expenditure the Armenians of Julfa, no less than the Persians in Isfahan, had to get "it from the gold, silver, copper and whatever they had in their houses, and chests of "clothes, furniture and utensils, selling them at the most paltry prices: and, when that "was insufficient, many of the poorest were also obliged to sell their own sons, daughters "and brothers to Persian soldiers, who bought them at a few 'abbasi, to make an ill use of "them at their pleasure afterwards, but even that did not suffice. As it was learnt that a "rich caravan of the Armenians was coming from Basra, and bringing with it more than "5,000 Tumans in coin, 2,000 of which belonged to the Messrs. Shariman, together with "various loads of merchandise the governor of the city and the mayor of Julfa at once "went off to meet it and, having met it three days' distance from Isfahan, had brought "into the city all the loads of money and goods there were, confiscating the whole indis- "criminately for the royal treasury, without leaving the Armenians as much as one thread "except for two boxes for the reverend Jesuit Fathers of Julfa, which a Lay Brother of "theirs named Frère Brazin found means to remove. He had recently been placed in the "service of the Tyrant as physician by the English gentlemen" (i.e. of the East India Company) "to whom he" (Nadir Shah) "had had recourse for a European doctor: and "when he (Nadir Shah) had obtained him, he ordered that three soldiers should be given "him as servants and guards, and a present of 50 Tumans in order to buy medicines—with "regard to which present the Superior of the Jesuits writes that he would willingly have "thanked the Tyrant, had he left them the Brother in the house.¹ But to return to the "affair of Julfa.

"Not only did so much money, brought by that very rich caravan and all of it seques- "trated for the royal treasury, not suffice to satisfy the avarice of the tyrannical usurper; "it rather served to sharpen his appetite for more. So, arguing that the Armenians must "be richer than he thought, he redoubled the orders to his tax-collectors to make further "efforts to extract more money still from them. They flogged the poor tormented people "without mercy, and when they (the tax-gatherers) saw their efforts bootless, because it "was impossible for anyone, who was not left with even a halfpenny to live, to give any "more money, they then turned to persuading the poor sufferers to give the names of some "other persons who should have it. 'Money, money,' they said, 'the Shah wants it, whether " 'justly or unjustly: say that another man owes you so much, and you and we shall be " 'quits.' So to escape dying under the blows of the sticks and the heated irons, they gave "the names of some imaginary debtor of theirs, who was soon taken and put under the "bastinado pole, in order that he should disgorge the money.

"Since Mr. Peter Shariman passed among the Armenians, and also among the Persians "as one of the richest, very many persons gave his name; for that reason the poor gentleman "had so many beatings, that he made his last confession and was given the Last Sacraments. "Then, as he saw that they never came to an end, fines upon fines, imposts after imposts, "hardly had he extricated himself from one than another was put on him, one day he "succeeded in escaping from the hands of the extortioners by throwing himself down from "the roof of his house into the neighbouring house, near the sacristy of the church of the "Carmelite Fathers. He entered their house barefooted, and in a parlous state: he asked "the Father for his slippers, and in them he escaped, it was not known where, and hid "himself so well that for 45 days and nights that he was sought in all the houses it was "never possible to find him: and this flight freed him from death, as we shall now tell.

"Ever keener to seek pretexts to have money the Tyrant one day had summoned to "him his chief 'keeper of the harness', and reproached him for having thieved a certain "horsecloth worked in gold and pearls. The 'keeper of the harness' replied or protested

¹ *Vide Cont. Basra Chron.:*

"23.6.1755 Brother Brazin, S.J., a Jesuit Lay Brother, had come to Basra by orders of the General to bring away Fr. Desvignes, the only surviving member of their mission at Julfa, and, as he was in bad health, to be his companion. "Brother Brazin waited 13 months at Basra in the House of the Carmelites: when he heard that Fr. Desvignes had left "Julfa, he himself left in a French ship for India. . . ."

"that he knew nothing about any such thing: he had three committed to his charge, and 'he could account for three, as could be clearly seen from the Daftar or book of accounts. "Without saying more the Tyrant had both his eyes at once put out: then, after a few "hours, having had the man again led before him, he threatened to make him die a painful "death, unless he at once declared to whom he had sold that horsecloth.¹ The luckless "servant, fearing to lose his life, gave the names of four Hebrews, four Zoroastrians, and "four Armenians—who were the two brothers Aratun and Peter Shariman, Aqa Nazar "and Khwajeh Minas, the first three Catholics and the fourth a schismatic. Immediately "diligent search was made for all, but for all the zeal used they were never able to find "Mr. Peter, for the reason given above that he had hidden himself some days before, nor "Aqa Nazar, and two of the four Zoroastrians accused, for the like reason that they had "escaped or fled.

"On 13.1.1747, therefore, the others were led into the presence of the Tyrant, viz. Mr. "Aratun and Mr. Minas, the Armenians, two Zoroastrians and four Jews: and the same "day, without further enquiry, he had one eye of each of them put out, their houses searched, "their property confiscated. As one of these Zoroastrians was the Sarraf" (i.e. money-changer and cashier) "of the English gentlemen" (i.e. the Agents of the East India Company), "taken in error because he had the same name as the other Gabr accused, the English "gentlemen tried by promises and by disbursing much money which they spent to free "him, but all in vain. To this end also they had a petition presented to the Tyrant, but, "instead of soothing him, this enraged him the more.

" 'How,' said the Tyrant, 'they have complained of the sentence I gave, which was " 'no more than an act of mercy. Very well: let justice in its entirety be done!' So he "had the poor sufferers again led before him, and without consenting to listen to reasoning "or prayers he gave orders that all of them should be burnt alive in the great square" (Maidan-i-Shah) "of the city: and because 'jussio regis urgebat'" (see the book of Daniel, 3-21) "that same day, which was 14.1.1747, at the same hour, about four in the afternoon, "there was soon lighted a great fire in the Maidan-i-Shah. In it the first to be thrown "were the unfortunate Mr. Aratun Shariman and Mr. Minas, bound together by a chain: "then the two Zoroastrians, and, lastly two by two, the four Jews, all of them 'cum bracciis " 'suis et tiaris et calceamentis et vestibus'" (see Daniel 3-21 regarding Shadrach, Mesach, Abednego).

"Mr. Minas died almost at once, because before he was thrown into the flames he had "lost consciousness in a swoon; but Mr. Aratun lingered more than an hour in the flames, "crying out for mercy and pardon for his sins till he expired. The night after, relatives "searched for their bones and, when recognized, those of Mr. Aratun were interred by the "Catholics in the sepulchre of his ancestors, and those of Mr. Minas by the heretics in "the cemetery of the Armenians. Both were sexagenarians and former heads of Julfa. "As to Mr. Minas, he always showed himself very zealous on the side of the heretics, and "Mr. Aratun as much on that of the Catholics, whose religion he had always promoted "both with his authority and with his money, supporting the missions and missionaries in "Isfahan and Julfa. . . . Happy he . . . for so glorious a motive to have so lost his life, "as indeed he lost it, dying by so inhuman an execution for a crime of which he was totally "innocent. He left three male children, the eldest of whom is Count Stephen, who at "present is in Venice.

"So cruel a death, which caused horror in the very Muhammadans, ended by throwing "into consternation the whole Armenian community, already terrified by the fear of being "all put to the sword, in accordance with the threats of the barbarian Shah. In fact "many asserted the order had already been given to the soldiers to be ready at the first "signal to fall upon all the Armenians in Julfa. When the missionary Fathers got to know "of this design, they made a petition to the chief minister of the Court and obtained from

¹ Perhaps the gold and pearls on the cloth were alleged to have been sold separately to various persons, not the single horsecloth to one guilty party.

"him a bodyguard of some soldiers to protect their Houses and the churches, whom they maintained at their own expense till the departure of the Tyrant, when they felt out of danger and free from any molestation.

"It is, however, true that this" (intended) "massacre did not take place, God having changed or postponed the evil design of the Tyrant who, when about to depart from Isfahan, said to the mayor (Kalantar) of Julfa who had gone to wish him a 'safe journey': 'For the present I keep in suspense the massacre of the Julfa people, and I overlook the blood of Peter and Aqa Nazar: on my return I shall look into the "accounts"!'" Then he demanded at how much they were selling children in Julfa. The answer was given him: 'Five 'abbasi for a girl, ten for a boy.' 'Well,' he (Nadir Shah) added, 'on my return I shall cause girls to be sold for one mahmudi, and one 'abbasi the boys!'¹

"It is said, besides, that in the space of five weeks that the Tyrant stayed in Isfahan, in killed, mutilated and tortured the number of persons reached 5,000.

"The cause why the Tyrant was so angered against the Armenians they say to have been that, having levied an imposition of a certain great sum of money on their patriarch, who usually resides in Echmiadzin,² a place in Persian territory, the latter finding himself unable to make so large a disbursement took refuge in Erzerum, a city of the Ottoman dominions: and for that he began to treat all the Armenians as rebels, although the Armenian community were not alone in having the misfortune to experience the effects of the cruelty and avarice of the tyrant on their race: Persians, even the more distinguished, were not exempt and in particular all officials and soldiers. For any slight suspicion or pretext found he caused very many of them to perish daily, either by the bowstring or under the pole . . . of eyes every day he had so many put out that heaps could be made of them. There were few men in his army who had not either their ears amputated, or nose cut off, or one eye lost, or had not been marked in another manner by the savagery of the Barbarian. Among those blinded in this, his latest stay in Isfahan, one was the young prince of Georgia. The reason for this punishment was that the Tyrant, having required of his father whom *two* years ago he (Nadir Shah) had honoured with the title and diadem of 'king of Georgia', that he should pay a certain very large sum of money, when he" (the 'king of Georgia') "sent a reply, according to what is said, that instead of money he had bullets to fire at his (Nadir Shah's) head. These and similar atrocities, which he was wont to practise on the people and his army, without regard either to the deserts or status of the persons concerned, were the cause that daily very many officers and soldiers were deserting from it; so that one day, when he held a general review of his army, he found it reduced to 80,000 soldiers only, when formerly there had been 200,000: thereupon he went into such a fury that he began to swear horribly at God, sparing no less his . . . prophet Muhammad.

" . . . At last on 21.1.1747 the Tyrant departed from Isfahan with all his army, proceeding to the province of Sistan, the governor of which, named Fath 'Ali Khan, had rebelled against him and awaited him in the field with a force that numbered 100,000 men. Already Quli Khan had sent against him two great armies to fight him; but both had been defeated and dispersed by the victorious troops of the governor in question, who was growing in strength daily by the multitude of deserters and other Persian chiefs who went over constantly to his side. He was already coining money with his own image and superscription, and had assumed the title of 'king of Persia', having himself called Shah Safi. . . .

"It is certain that the Tyrant is in great straits owing to this new and unforeseen revolt, seeing himself daily more abandoned by his own men and his party diminishing.

"To appease the petty people, both when coming to and going from Isfahan, he sought

¹ Five 'abbasi = 20 shahi = one-fifth of 1 qran, or rial (latest nomenclature): i.e. Nadir Shah hinted that parents would be ten times more ready to sell their offspring.

² Perhaps this was the fine inflicted (in 1745) on the Katholikos Lazarus of 5,000 Tumans, already mentioned in this chapter.

"to employ some acts of generosity and clemency, which served, however, to make known more widely his innate avarice and cruelty. . . . On his entry he had cried through the squares and round the quarters that flour and bread should be sold at 1 'abbasi, whereas previously they had been selling for 2 'abbasi; but, as the owners (of flour) who had purchased it at a dearer price did not willingly accommodate themselves to selling it at a loss at that price, the Tyrant had all their stores confiscated and distributed to soldiers, as much flour as was found in houses and shops. The other act of 'generosity', which he did on his departure, was to bid the governor of Isfahan take 1,000 Tumans from the rich and have the money distributed to the poor—an easy method of giving alms! . . .

" . . . When the Tyrant had departed the governor of the city, showing himself more humane than the Shah, for some days tried to tranquillize the people, refusing to listen to accusations of any kind, so that little by little those who had hidden themselves began to appear: and then it was perceived that all this clemency of the governor was nothing but a feint to catch them, for he at once had Messrs. Leo and Peter Shariman together with Mr. Wali Jan and other leading Armenians made prisoners and bastinadoed so cruelly that all their toe-nails fell off, and the bare bones of the feet were to be seen: he claimed from the Messrs. Shariman 2,500 Tumans for the release of the houses confiscated by the Tyrant: so that the poor gentlemen, who had been so despoiled of their money by the past imposts they had paid, in order not to perish miserably under the bastinado, after having given up all the silverware there was in their church, were obliged along with other Armenians to send men to Basra, accompanied by officials of the governor of Isfahan, to take from their agents all the money they could find or borrow. . . ."

A letter¹ from Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret, dated Julfa, 16.8.1747, shows how blood-stained, almost demoniacal the monster became in the few months of February to June which closed his career—bold *condottiere* and energetic general that he had been, a 'conquistador', whose feats had attracted the attention of the world and flattered the pride of his race:

"The cruel man came this last winter to this capital, and his wicked occupation was nothing but mutilating, strangling and burning people, and burying them alive: all this in order to extract money and make himself the proud (monarch) feared throughout all the world. Among others he had burnt alive the pillar of the Catholic religion in this country, the good 'Count' Aratun Shariman, without rhyme or reason: and a few days later there died of a broken heart and fright his brother 'Count' Leo Shariman, both brothers of 'Count' David Shariman, living in Leghorn. Now there is left one brother, 'Count' Peter Leopold Shariman, together with various nephews all of whom may God preserve for the benefit of the Catholic Faith.

"After having sated himself with cruelties the wretch went on to the town of Kirman "[? *sic* for Sistan or Qazwin], and did the same there, more or less. He continued on to Mashhad, the capital of Khurasan; and there gave way to excesses and had seven very high towers made of human heads. He had buried alive two sons of 'Ali Quli Khan, his nephew, and the eyes put out of the mother and wife of the latter. He sallied forth from Mashhad to go elsewhere, and on the march took into his head to put to the sword all his bodyguard, consisting of 4,000 men; but they got wind of the iniquitous intention of the monarch and ten of the more courageous of them went at night into the royal tent and with their swords hacked to pieces the tyrant, and sent portions of his flesh to all parts of the country. But the head was cut off and put on the top of a lance and carried in triumph for sport.

"The cause of his end," had said the writer at the beginning of the letter, "was nothing else than his tyrannical fits of madness, which in the last year of his life it was his whim to exploit to the utmost. . . .

¹ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 201.

“Under the rule of the Tyrant we missionaries were thankful never to be attacked directly but only indirectly through the continual extortion from Christians in general: so in that direction we enjoyed the Divine providence, because on various occasions, when the Armenian patriarch” (i.e. Lazarus) “. . . was trying to have us expelled from Persia, by the special favour of God and owing to fear they had of a sovereign so unbalanced and tyrannical they never succeeded. . . .”

It was the night of the 19th–20th June 1747 when Nadir Shah the Afshar was assassinated. His age was then reckoned as 63—lunar years, no doubt. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* quotes one historian as describing Nadir Shah as a

‘most comely man, upward of six feet in height, well proportioned and of robust constitution: with fine large black eyes and eyebrows . . . a loud, strong voice: a moderate wine-drinker, and fond of simple diet.’

★

★

★

★

★

THE INTERREGNUM

FROM 1747 AS FAR AS 1780

STRICTLY SPEAKING, this chapter scarcely deals with the 'Mission' of the Carmelites in Persia: there were isolated and individual Religious residing in one or other of the Residences for a few years at a time, and the Order continued to designate as an entity—the Persian 'Mission'—missionaries sent out to Mesopotamia, to appoint Vicars Provincial and occasionally Visitors to this 'Persian' Mission; but the only living continuity among the Carmelites in the Residences was at Basra, nominally in the Ottoman dominions. The mother-convent in Isfahan of their Eastern missions was occupied by one Lay Brother till 1758: when Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret quitted Julfa in 1752 in order to be consecrated bishop of the diocese he left, strangely enough, no Carmelite priest behind him there; nor in any other Residence in Persia, for the premises at Shiraz lay razed to the ground. True, there was Fr. Urban then working at Bandar 'Abbas, and that later at Kharg and Bushire buildings were purchased and erected, and useful work done over a decade or less. In illustration of the abnormal position in the supply of data and information thus created it may be mentioned that out of 142 letters of Carmelite Religious examined or used for this chapter only 8 were actually written inside the present limits of Iran, the rest in Mesopotamia or farther afield by members of the Order working in that area: the balance of the material on affairs in Persia, which is particularly copious, comes from non-Carmelite sources, from Dominicans and others. It is unavoidable, therefore, that conditions prevailing in Persia from 1747 onwards should be recounted in the words of these contemporary writers before the reasons for abandonment of the mission posts can be realized and judged. The period is treated by a number of European historians, some of them writing less than fifty years later: their presentation of the facts can thus both be used by the student to supplement the details here given, collated from a number of writers, and be detected, when incorrect or doubtful in the light of this evidence by intelligent European observers watching the scene of action.

"After the death of Nadir, commonly called Tahmasp, 'Ali Quli Khan under the name "of 'Adil Shah,¹ seized the sovereignty of the kingdom of Persia . . ."

explained to Rome Archbishop Dominic Salvini of Nakhchiwan on 22.9.1748;² but, nearer at hand and few months after the assassination, Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret, Vicar of and writing from Julfa, 16.8.1747,³ stated:

"'Ali Quli Khan, his nephew, at present reigns under the title of 'Adil Shah: the noted "Fr. Damian, the Capuchin missionary, serves him as physician, and it is hoped that "under this new government the country and its subjects will breathe, as he has ordered "that for three years to come taxes should not be paid, nor any sort of excise. . . ."⁴

Archbishop Salvini's letter—news from Tabriz in August 1748—went on:

"Civil war has broken out at Tabriz, as also in the province of Erivan and its dependencies. . . . Ill content" (with 'Adil Shah) "the people of Tabriz proclaimed the

¹ Literally the 'Just Shah'.

² *S.N.R.*, V, p. 254.

³ *Idem*, p. 201.

⁴ That hope was extinguished. In 1746 the Jesuit Lay Brother Brazin replaced Fr. Damian. In 1747 the Father was back in the hospice at Tabriz, but before long he was badly beaten by thieves who thought he must have brought back treasure from the army, and after three days he died from his injuries.

“pretender Siyam [?] *sic*] whom 'Ali (Quli) opposed, sending against him Amir Aslan Khan, “who defeated Siyam with no small slaughter of the people of Tabriz. Finding himself “victorious Amir Aslan Khan was not ready to stomach the distribution of governorships “made by 'Ali (Quli), and showed his resentment by suggesting a fresh outcome of it to “Ibrahim, a younger brother of 'Ali Quli, against whom they united and marched their “forces. After some actions 'Ali Quli got his brother Ibrahim to make peace, and Amir “Aslan Khan saved himself by flight to Hurmi [?] *sic* for Urmieh]. Meanwhile Armenia “was suffering from the burdens of various factions and calamities. Finding himself in “peaceful possession 'Ali sent considerable sums of money to many provinces so that they “should be distributed to the poor inhabitants, for them to provide what was needed for “the cultivation of the land lying abandoned, promising too to lighten the usual tribute “for some time. . . .”

Referring to Persian affairs in a letter of 15.1.1749,¹ Bishop Emmanuel of Baghdad alluded to another result of this fratricidal strife:

“As to the news from Persia that empire is continually going from bad to worse: and “famine reigns to such a pitch that no bread to eat is to be had. We do not know how “the poor missionaries are faring, because for many months we have received no letters “from them . . .”:

and he had fresh news, received in Baghdad about 10.1.1749:

“'Ali Quli Khan . . . was proclaimed king of Persia by the greater part of the country; “but his brother, called Ibrahim Khan, gave him battle and overcame him and took him “prisoner and at once put out his eyes, and for some months he (Ibrahim Khan) remained “without declaring himself Shah, but lately all the grandees of the country collected in “Tabriz and he was acknowledged by all. This news reached Baghdad only five or six “days ago. . . .”

The account in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*,² based on the *History* by R. G. Watson and others, may here be utilized to explain—as extant letters of the Religious do not—that 'Adil Shah

‘began by putting to death the sons of Nadir Shah, i.e. Riza Quli³ and Nasrullah⁴ and all ‘relatives except Shah Rukh, son of Riza Quli . . . : dethroned by his own brother Ibrahim, ‘Ibrahim was in turn defeated by adherents of Shah Rukh, who made the latter king. ‘. . . The son of Mirza Daud, chief Mulla of Mashhad, then declared himself king, as ‘being a descendant of Shah Sulaiman, and imprisoned and blinded Shah Rukh. But the ‘latter’s general defeated and slew the pretender, and replaced Shah Rukh on the throne.’ (This was in Mashhad, and Khurasan, the capital of that eastern province.) ‘After the ‘death of Nadir Shah, Ahmad Khan 'Abd'ali (Afghan) marched off with his men to ‘Kandahar, of which he took possession. Afghanistan was at once lost to the Persian crown, ‘for he founded an independent kingdom. . . . Later, after the blinding of Shah Rukh, ‘he reappeared in Khurasan, took possession of Mashhad, slew Mir 'Alam and pledged ‘the local chiefs to support Shah Rukh.

‘On the murder of Nadir Shah the chief of the Bakhtiari, Rashid, escaped to the moun- ‘tains, while Muhammad Hasan Khan, chief of the Qajar tribe, resisted Ahmad Khan and ‘the Afghans, and eventually brought under his sway Gilan, Mazandaran, Astrabad’ (provinces).

¹ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 266.

² 10th ed.

³ This was the son already blinded by his father about 1742.

⁴ ? *sic* for Nazar 'Ali Mirza, as the physician of Nadir writes the name.

'In Azarbaijan Azad Khan, a general of Nadir, had established a separate government. 'Ali Mardan Khan, brother of the Bakhtiari chief, took forcible possession of Isfahan and put forward Isma'il, nephew of Shah Sultan Husain, with himself as one of Isma'il's two 'ministers' (Wazirs) 'the other being Karim Khan, chief of the Zand Kurds. After a time 'Ali Mardan Khan was assassinated, and Karim Khan was solely in power at Isfahan. A three-sided war between Karim Khan (Zand), Azad Khan (Afghan) and Muhammad Hasan Khan (Qajar) ensued.

'Karim Khan, after arranging matters with Isfahan, marched to the borders of Mazandaran: victory in the fight was with Muhammad Hasan Khan, who was unable to follow up the foe, as he had to encounter Azad Khan. The latter . . . in Gilan. Karim Khan reunited his troops at Tihiran, and retired to Isfahan.

'Azad Khan shut himself up in Qazwin. Next spring Karim Khan advanced to meet Azad Khan, and was defeated and pursued to Isfahan by Azad Khan: he continued on to Shiraz, with Azad Khan following. He (Karim Khan) threw himself on the mercy of the Arabs of the Garmsir,¹ who rose in a body to turn on Azad Khan. With their aid Karim Khan repaired his losses and advanced on Isfahan. The Afghan did not await his coming, but retired to his government of Tabriz. The Zand issued from Isfahan, was defeated by the Qajar a second time and then took refuge behind the walls of Shiraz. The Qajar then invaded Azarbaijan and turned out Azad Khan.

'Next year Muhammad Hasan Khan returned to march on Shiraz with 80,000 men. Karim Khan was obliged to take shelter in Shiraz and the neighbourhood was laid waste. Muhammad Hasan Khan had to retire to the north. Karim Khan moved to Isfahan, where he received the submission of nearly all the chief cities of Persia.

'Muhammad Hasan Khan was murdered. . . .'

All the second part of that abridgment reads like moves in a game of chess, but complicated with three kings and forces instead of the usual number; and it is the more confusing because no dates, nor even years, are mentioned. For greater precision the Carmelites and other Religious often prove useful sources.

Perhaps early in 1751 there was no extensive fighting or struggle. Fr. Berselli, O.P., left in Isfahan, had 'written that affairs in Persia are recovering a better outlook', so another Dominican² reported. But

'towards the end of last year' (i.e. 1751) "on the occasion the Lurs or Bakhtiari, a race of robbers by profession, took by assault and entered the city of Isfahan, a payment of money was imposed by them on everyone—and we, as we had no longer the Sharimans to protect us, were also taxed to pay the sum mentioned in order to be freed from molestation and imprisonment. . . . At present all Persia is in upheaval, for which cause many of our Catholic flock have fled to the frontier, and others to India, Muscovy and Europe. . . ."

To cite one example of the insecurity prevailing on the roads, the writer, Bishop Sebastian of S. Margaret,³ when he had travelled to Baghdad from Isfahan in the beginning of 1752,

"had paid 40 scudi on the cost of the journey itself, 20 scudi on 'Rahdari',⁴ and 40 scudi for the five hundred musketeers who were taken from Isfahan as an escort for the great caravan with which I came and arrived safely in forty days at Baghdad, for which I and my servant were taxed—one scudo *per diem*: without the escort the caravan would undoubtedly have been looted, and we passengers massacred or made prisoners by the robber rebels, who made several attempts in Kurdistan to attack it. . . ."

¹ 'Garmsir' = the 'hot country', i.e. the littoral of the Persian Gulf and belt of Fars just above it.

² Fr. Gaetano Codileonino from Mausil, 2.7.1751, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 26.

³ 25 4 1752, *S.R.*, vol. 753.

⁴ i.e. illegal tolls taken by local potentates—such as were still being taken by *force majeure* on the southern roads in 1912, and after the war.

Next, writing from Basra 23.12.1753,¹ after he had been for some months in Bushire in company with the Bishop, Mgr Sebastian's brother and Vicar General reported to Mgr Lercari, Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation:

"... In the month of October 1753 such bad news came from Julfa and Isfahan that "it was no longer practicable for us to penetrate as far as there in any way whatsoever, "because the 'general' of the Persian army named Karim Khan, the present governor of "Isfahan, who in the capacity of protector of Julfa used to support the missionaries and "Christians there, at the end of the campaign" (i.e. season) "was defeated in the warfare "and, beaten by the enemy, was compelled to flee and abandon Isfahan. So the men "from Luristan and the Afghans² forced their way into the city and, being folk given to "pillaging and plundering and making slaves of Christians, they then at once levied a "very large and exorbitant imposition of money on the city of Isfahan and Julfa of 60,000 "Tumans (each Tuman=5 Venetian sequins) and afterwards subjected to the bastinado "and put to the sword many persons, and then looted the town of Julfa for a number of "days, and made prisoners of various Christian families.

"So the kingdom of Persia and the capital, Isfahan, in particular, and Julfa at present "are in such a state of upheaval that all the Christians have fled. . . ."

The Bishop of Isfahan had copied at Basra, 30.4.1754,³ a letter from Julfa, presumably written by the Dominican Fr. Raymond Berselli, about what happened in that incursion of October 1753:

"Finally," he observed, "we have fallen into the hands of the rebel Afghans. Azad "Khan, their head, entered Isfahan victoriously and straightway assumed the sovereign "power, and he is taking up his lodging in the royal palace, and his troops composed of "rascals and robbers have taken up their quarters in the Convent of the Portuguese Augus- "tinian Fathers, and they are putting their horses in the church, making a stable of it, as "they did that of the Capuchin Fathers some time back,⁴ when the Lurs took and sacked "Isfahan. They tried to take up quarters also in your" (i.e. the Carmelite) "convent, but "your wideawake and adroit Lay Brother Ferdinand⁵ went personally to the head of the "rebels and managed so well that he obtained a guard with orders that no one was to "trouble him. Notwithstanding this the soldiery are so insolent that very many times in "the day officers and soldiers go and molest him. . . . Julfa has been given over to their "allies, the Uzbaks, also great rascals and robber rebels, to whom Julfa has daily to give "money for their food and other things. . . ."

How those constant irruptions of fresh looters drained the resources of and tried the missionaries as well as civilians may be judged from the same writer's letter of 4.2.1754:⁶

"... They have recently imposed a new fine on Julfa and consequently also on us. "They came to exact it from me at night-time with staves and lanterns. I received several "blows. Having no money I gave them the chalice once more: then, when day had "dawned I obtained some money by borrowing on loan and, when I had handed over "the money, the amount of the impost on me, I got back the chalice. Since the coming "of the Afghan robbers till today I have paid in impositions 54 'hazar'⁷ which make 526 "Roman scudi, for which I am in debt with interest to those who lent it me. For having

¹ Fr. Hyacinth of S. Teresa, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 184.

² Early in July 1753, or in June, the Carmelite Fr. Adalbert in Aleppo had passed on precise news that "the Afghans "had taken the road for Isfahan in order to sack the city" (*vide S.N.R.*, VI, p. 168, Fr. Dominic Lanza, O.P., 18.7.1753).

³ and ⁶ *Vide S.R.*, vol. 759, p. 251.

⁴ i.e. towards the end of 1751.

⁵ Fra. Ferdinand of S. Teresa.

⁷ Dinar, perhaps?—1,000 dinar being the modern alternative term for 1 gran, one-tenth of 1 Tuman; but the exchange value with scudi does not seem to bear out that supposition.

"killed some Afghans at the time they attempted to enter Isfahan the people in three large villages near Isfahan have been looted, part carried off as slaves, and part put to death.¹ "The caravans, which were coming from Bushire and Bandar Rig to Isfahan" (God inspired your Illustr. lordship not to come by them . . .) "were entirely looted by the Afghans and "Tatars" (i.e. Uzbaks) ". . . one day's march from Isfahan. The head of the caravan, "Khvajeh Muhammad, who also had nearly 4,000 Tumans in merchandise from India "and Europe, was plundered of it all, and carried off a prisoner and, when afterwards "taken to Isfahan, ransomed by his relations for 25 Tumans. Some Armenians, who threw "themselves into a well to save themselves, were suffocated: three Armenians alone escaped "and arrived half dead and naked in Julfa: as to all the rest some were killed, some carried "off as prisoners. Everything your Illustr. lordship was sending us for food and clothing "and to carry on was taken. Well, well! patience! We thank you neither more nor less "for your kind heart and compassion on us. . . ."

Speaking of the constant raiding by the Lurs or Bakhtiari, and latterly by the Afghans, who the previous October had once more sacked Isfahan and Julfa, Bishop Sebastian, in his letter of 14.1.1754,² after mentioning that all his flock had fled from those and other places in Persia and the majority taken refuge with him in Basra, added this item:

" . . . impositions were so great that they are selling men, women, boys and girls like oxen, "sheep, and horses. . . ."

Another observation on the condition of the country may be cited: the Bishop of Baghdad, 20.9.1754, wrote:

"From Hamadan to Baghdad there is not a single Christian: the Residence and the "church at Hamadan are entirely destroyed, and the town itself to such a degree that "there are not to be found 200 inhabitants. . . . Not a single Armenian remains, all "having been killed, or carried off into slavery, or become refugees in the Turkish "dominions . . ." (see his report to the Pope, printed in Rome).

These reports tend to show that there were two raids, one by the Bakhtiari at the end of 1751, the other by men of Luristan and the Afghans in October 1753.³

¹ Another letter: "They demand 1,800 Tumans from Julfa. . . . We are all being badly handled: they plunder the "house of him who has no cash ready down to his clothing. . . ."

² Basra, *S.R.*, vol. 759, p. 248.

³ Of the operations in 1754-6 details to fill in the gap may be borrowed from the diaries of the East India Company's agent at Gāmburūn:

"22.8.1754. Advices from Lhar (Lar) mention that Azad Caun (Khan) has taken Shyrash (Shiraz) and has sent the "principal inhabitants to Spahan . . . he massacred upwards of 4,000 people. It is reported that Careem (Karim) "Caun is at Dashtistan" (i.e. the district of the littoral lying immediately behind Bushire and Bandar Rig, and southwards to Tangistan) "with a body of 2,000 men. Spahan advices mention that 'Alī Mardan Caun has pulled out the "eyes of —, that Azad Caun has gained another battle over the joint forces of Karim Khan and . . .

"9.9.1754. Karim Khan has made several attempts to wrest the government from Azad Khan, but hitherto proved "unsuccessful: he is now at Kazarun. Azad Khan was at Shiraz with an army of about 12,000 men, it is said.

"Tuesday, 17.9.1754. Spahan was in the possession of Azad Khan, which he took 10th of September last, a few days after "his entering the city he began to levy taxes, not only on its inhabitants, but likewise on those of Julfa: the inhabitants "there have broken open and plundered everything therein: those who were unable to answer his demands in ready "money were obliged to submit to have goods taken from them to much more than the amount . . . taxed from 1 "to 100 Tumans in proportion with their circumstances. Most inhuman punishments have been inflicted, so that both "sexes have been obliged to sell themselves to the 'Turks' and others, in order to raise the sums demanded. Yazd is "said to be almost ruined through his exactions, he having demanded 50,000 Tumans.

"Tuesday, 24.9.1754. Advices from Bandar Rig" (the small port, 30 miles NW. of Bushire) "mention that Azad Khan "sent Fath 'Alī Khan with a body to Kazarun" (a town now of some 6,000 inhabitants, 100 miles from Bushire on the main road to Shiraz, from which it is 75 miles) "where they have massacred numbers of innocent people, that the "inhabitants of Dashtistan have joined the Shaikh of Bandar Rig, who is making the necessary preparations to defend "himself . . . that upon the report of Fath 'Alī Khan's designing to march to Bandar Rig and Bushire most of the "principal merchants retired with their effects to Carack" (i.e. Kharg)

Two years passed before the correspondence extant again refers to the situation: and then a letter of 14.9.1756 from Basra¹ mentions vaguely:

"Up till now Persia continues in revolution: it would seem as if it was about to wear a 'better appearance, since for eight months already² at the most there has been a 'king' 'residing in Isfahan by the name of Shah Isma'il, who after having reigned for three years in 'Isfahan already, seven years previously³ . . . so that there is ground for hoping for the 'best. . . ."

But of this puppet Shah Isma'il Safawi, of whose nominal reign of some three years and eight months neither histories nor coinage appear to have left traces, two months later, 8.11.1756,⁴ the same Carmelite reported:

"In accordance with the instructions given me it is my duty to inform Mgr Lercari, Archbishop of Rhodes, that at the end of the campaign of the year 1756, in the month 'of September last, the acknowledged king of Persia was once again driven from his throne 'by the army general named Azad Khan, head of the Afghans, who now commands in 'Isfahan. . . ."

Yet by 20.5.1757—temporarily—the warring forces had been moved elsewhere, for the man on the spot, Fr. Raymond Berselli, O.P., remarked:⁵

"At present this city is without a master. There are neither Afghans nor Qajars nor 'Zands. . . ."

But three months later, 23.8.1757,⁶ from Basra, the Vicar General Fr. Hyacinth recorded the final elimination of the Afghan competitor, Azad Khan:

"In Persia there has been a great battle and one of the pretenders has won it, and entirely 'defeated the army of Azad Khan, the pretender to the throne, who has fled from Persia 'and with 54 men only escaped and come to Baghdad, where he has been received by 'Sulaiman Pasha of Baghdad. This Azad Khan is the head of the Afghans who have 'totally sacked all Persia. . . ."

Fr. Raymond Berselli, O.P., in another letter, 8.2.1758,⁷ explained to the Secretary to the Sacra. Congregation, Mgr Antonelli, how the process of elimination had progressed:

"*Friday, 8.11.1754.* Advices from Shiraz mention that Azad Khan left that place last month for Spahaun: that he had 'lost many fine soldiers in the several encounters that he had with Karim Khan in the mountains of Kamarj." (On the steep ascent of the Kutal-i-Kamarj, which is off the high road from Bushire to Kazarun, the site of the fighting is still traditionally indicated, the Kutal itself being known locally as 'Kutal-i-Azad Khani'.)

"*28.11.1754.* In our last address we acquainted you of Azad Khan's being at Shiraz, from whence he proceeded to 'Kazarun in quest of Karim Khan, who had gathered together about 6,000 men, with whom he kept on the mountains 'of Kamarj, where he had several skirmishes with Azad Khan, whose men, being unacquainted with those mountains, 'were finally defeated. Karim Khan has likewise taken the road for Spahaun.

"*April 1755.* Advices from Spahaun mention that Azad Caun still continues oppressing the inhabitants and has put 'to death many people."

"*4.2.1756.* Affairs in this kingdom continue still in the same fluctuating state as for some years past. Azad Caun, who 'for some time has been in the government of Spahaun and the adjacent country" (i.e. ruling over, possessed of Isfahan and its district) "left that city on 13.11.(1755), going to the assistance of his general, Fath 'Ali Caun, who had, however, 'been defeated at Kashan by Hassan Khan Qajar. In November" (i.e. 1755) "Karim Khan left Shiraz with an intent 'to conquer Kirman . . . when advices were brought to him of Azad Khan having left Spahaun, upon which he immediately altered his resolution and bent his march on Spahaun, which city he got possession of without a ball being 'fired."

"*Sunday, 25.4.1756.* Letters in three days from Spahaun advise that within a day's journey of that place a battle has 'been fought between Hasan Khan Qajar and Karim Khan, in which the latter's force was defeated, and he with '200-300 horse made his escape towards Shiraz, that Hasan Khan made his entry into Spahaun 26.3.1756 . . ."

¹ Fr. Hyacinth of S. Teresa, *S.R.*, vol. 773, p. 381.

² See also *Acta* for 1757, Congregation session of 8.8.1757.

³ *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 92.

⁴ *S.R.*, vol. 773.

⁵ i.e. since about January 1756.

⁶ Fr. Hyacinth, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 280.

⁷ *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 380.

"As to Isfahan I can tell you that the warfare continues and at present only two claimants to the kingdom of Persia remain—one named Karim Khan, the other Hasan Khan: God grant that there be peace in this country, also between the Christian princes, because the war brings many trials with it. . . ."

When in the interval Muhammad Hasan Khan Qajar was murdered did not appear in the letters examined, but it was presumably about the beginning of 1760, for on 16.8.1760¹ in Aleppo Fr. Leopold Soldini, O.P., on his way East:

"had written" (this) "when there arrived sure news that Karim Khan, the new king of Persia, is in peaceful possession of the crown, so that trade is being reopened and the missionaries will be able to enter . . .":

while by 8.11.1760² from Julfa itself Fr. Raymond Berselli, O.P., was able to tell the Sacra. Congregation:

" . . . At present the country and roads are (in) good (order). Karim Khan Zand, who has *eight fine provinces* out of this vast empire, is a good prince, and rules well: he is well disposed towards his Christian subjects. May God preserve and prosper him! He is not at war with other chiefs, who hold the other provinces of this country. For the rest, very few Christians have remained in Julfa and the Catholics are only some 30 persons—poor people, who have been unable to run away and leave during these past disastrous years. There are always however here some petty traders, oriental Christians passing through" (i.e. Isfahan). . . .

Bishop Emmanuel³ of Baghdad had addressed to the Cardinal Prefect a letter, unfortunately lost or purloined on its way, unless unobserved by the compiler in his search—"in the beginning of March last" (i.e. 1763) ". . . a report on the complete victory which Karim Khan had over his competitors . . .": whether, therefore, there was fresh fighting between 1758 and 1763 does not appear in this correspondence. Bishop Emmanuel went on to notify Rome that, when this complete victory was known in Baghdad:

" . . . a number of Persian and Armenian families, who had taken refuge in Baghdad for a long time past, made arrangements to return to their homes. On 16.4.(i.e. 1763) there arrived here from Aleppo . . . two Dominican Fathers, called Fr. Vincent Ferrer (Ricci) and Fr. John Baptist (de Bernardis) appointed to Isfahan . . . they could not have arrived in Baghdad in more favourable circumstances for reaching their destination. . . . The Fathers had all the time necessary to get ready for the journey and finally departed on 15.5.(1763), with a caravan, said to number more than 10,000!"

Two months later the same bishop had had from Fr. Raymond Berselli, O.P., a letter dated 18.4.1763,⁴ in which the Dominican Religious in Julfa had reported

'all Persia, and Isfahan in particular, quiet, and well provided' (with food) 'thanks to the prudent rule of Karim Khan'.

Indeed the Father's own words were:

"temporal affairs could not be going better than they are, but it is not the same with spiritual affairs",

¹ *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 574.

³ *Idem*, VII, p. 211, his letter of 25.5.1763.

² *Idem*, p. 637.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 178.

implying that there was no missionary to care for the Christians. By this time the new Bishop of Isfahan, Mgr Cornelius of S. Joseph, had arrived in the region and from Basra, 5.7.1763,¹ had more explicit information to give:

"Persia—or rather Isfahan and the provinces subject to Karim Khan are now quite 'quiet, and living is cheap; but the country is empty of men and money. None of 'the Catholics who went away have been signalled as returned, for they foresee fresh 'disturbances and revolts on the death of Karim Khan, who for the same reason up till 'now has not cared to assume the title of 'Shah', but simply that of 'governor'. . . ."

Then he turned to the Persian Gulf:

". . . Some months ago with a squadron of three vessels the English destroyed Bandar 'Abbas,² otherwise called Gāmburun, a Persian town at the mouth of the Gulf, as they 'had just transported their Factory, which they had there to another place³ on the Persian 'Gulf, called Bandar Bushire ('Bandar' in Persian signifies 'port'), a place only a few hours 'distant from Kharg island. . . ."

To the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation Bishop Cornelius resumed his exposition of political events a year later, 2.8.1764,⁴ as he was about to proceed from Basra to Bushire:⁵

". . . That Karim Khan, who at present rules part of Persia under the title of 'Deputy' 'or 'Representative'='Wakil') of whoever may be the" (rightful) "Shah, has taken the 'city of Tabriz, and caused to submit to him his principal rival, 'Ali Fath [? *sic* for Fath "Ali] Qajar, led⁶ to hopes of seeing the tranquillity so much desired revive in this region: "and indeed the roads were open for some months, and the two Dominican Fathers mentioned profited by it to proceed to Julfa. But this tranquillity was only for a breathing-space: and it has been soon disturbed by the treason of Zaki Khan, governor of Isfahan, "who rebelled against his own brother, Karim Khan. The latter, being obliged to fight "with him, succeeded in taking from him the capital which the former" (Zaki Khan) "had "sacked and in gaining some advantage over him, without however having been able till "now to bring him to submission. What must make that good warrior" (Karim Khan) "more apprehensive are the secret plots which are constantly being made by the chief "officials of the Court against his" (Karim Khan's) "life; although, contrary to his peaceable "nature, he has been compelled to punish a large number of them with death, either on "proof or on suspicion" (of complicity). "Things being in so critical a state not even a "single one of our Catholics, who had gone abroad, has so far returned to Persia, nor a "single Armenian merchant, notwithstanding the repeated invitations and tempting "promises made by Karim Khan, since all foresee that fresh disturbances will surely follow

¹ S.N.R., VII, p. 219.

² *Vide English Factory Records: 'December 1754. Factory established at Bandar Rig, but demolished three years later. 'October 1759, English Factory at Gāmburun taken by the French fleet and destroyed. British re-established in 1760. '1763, removal of the Factory to Bushire.'* The proximate cause of this punitive act and of the removal from Gāmburun was the hostility of the Khan of Lar, an independent potentate, as explained below.

³ The removal of the East India Company's Factory from Gāmburun (Bandar 'Abbas) had one curious sequel, as told by *Cont. Basra Chron.* under the year 1763:

"From this time, since they had suppressed their trading house in Bandar 'Abbas, the Resident at Basra was at the 'same time a Member of Council of Bombay, on account of which office on festival occasions and on the arrival of a new "Mutasallim he was given precedence over the Frenchman notwithstanding agreements to the contrary with the Sublime "Porte, and regularly the Englishman was received by the Mutasallim before the Frenchman, not because the Turks had "acquired in prerogatives of the offices of a Councillor but because each year the trade of the English was 'blooming' "with a number of ships . . . and very fine gifts were presented to the Turks, which the French were not at all in a "position to do, not because the will was lacking, but the means, so long as their trade is inactive, as it is up to today. . . ."

⁴ S.N.R., VII, p. 266.

⁵ While it is interesting to note that he spelt the word "*Abouscir*" with the initial 'Alif' in the same false Arabicized form as some native Bushire merchants and others have done to this day, the origin of the name is held by at least one great modern orientalist to be 'Bukht-i-Ardashir', i.e. from a purely Persian and non-Arabic derivation.

⁶ This must have taken place, therefore, before April 1763 and after the beginning of 1760.

"his death, of which it is hourly expected to hear, because of the definitely certain news
 "of the dislike the chief officials have for him, principally because Karim Khan through
 "his intercourse with the Armenians and Georgians has abandoned himself to drinking
 "wine to excess—a thing the Persians cannot suffer. . . ."

Still more forcibly three months later, 10.11.1764,¹ Bishop Cornelius of Isfahan, evidently put out at the attention the Sacr. Congregation had paid to remarks from Baghdad and elsewhere on his failure to reach his diocesan capital, expostulated:

"If Persia were in that tranquillity which the Sacr. Congregation suppose,² I should
 "have no need to be urged to set out for Isfahan, but matters are very different from what
 "they think in Europe. As previously confusion reigns: there is no head, nor tail: and
 "Karim Khan, whom the newspapers³ make out to be so powerful, is not in a position to
 "make himself obeyed, because of his small forces and many adversaries: and up till now
 "he has not been able to assume the title of 'king'. When the roads open in one direction,
 "two others are blocked in another without any remedy being effected. As soon as I
 "shall have reached Bushire I shall write to your Illustr. lordship in greater detail, as
 "I promised in my preceding letter, this being only to give you advice of the receipt of the
 "letters dispatched to me by the Sacr. Congregation in January, February and March. . . ."

From Bushire, 2.5.1765,⁴ that promised report was indited, and to the reader and student today is of real interest: it is the work of a man evidently talented in the framing of such reviews, and a man with long experience of the East and a dispassionate outlook on passing political events: it had a definite purpose:

"to acquaint the Sacr. Congregation with the present temporal and spiritual state of Persia,
 "so that your Eminence and your Eminent colleagues may be able for themselves to judge
 "whether in the present circumstances it be prudent, useful and possible for me to reside
 "in Isfahan: or whether it be more expedient that I should dwell in some other place in
 "the diocese for the greater profit of the souls committed to my care. . . ."

"Turning now to speak of the condition and temporal government of this country, this
 "is what at present Karim Khan possesses—the town and provinces of

"Isfahan	Shushtar
"Shiraz	Gilan
"Tabriz	Azarbaijan
"Hamadan	and part of Greater Armenia,

"together with Luristan, the province of which he is a native. All the rest of the country
 "is divided up under the control of various other usurpers,

"(a) *Khurasan*—a very vast province, from which sprang the famous Nadir Shah, known
 "in Europe by the name of Quli Khan, has as its 'king' the grandson of Nadir
 "Shah, called Shah Rukh (Shah in Persian means 'king') and he is also grandson
 "by his mother of "Shah Tahmasp,⁵ the last legitimate king of the true race of
 "the 'Sufi' sovereigns of Persia. He would have been by now recognized by the
 "Persians, if he had not had the misfortune to be blinded by the rebels: and now
 "it is thought by many that people are waiting for a son of his to grow up, in
 "order that that son may be proclaimed sovereign of the whole of Persia,

¹ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 286.

² As an example of the opinions directly to the contrary which were reaching the Sacr. Congregation, see Bishop Emmanuel of Baghdad, 5.1.1765 (*S.N.R.*, VII, p. 292):

"... It is certain that Persia continues to be very tranquil under the wise rule of Karim Khan, who is in peaceful possession of that kingdom: and an unequivocal proof of it is the frequency with which rich caravans come and go between Isfahan and Baghdad. . . ."

³ An early example of misrepresentation by the Press!

⁴ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 308

⁵ Not grandson of Shah Sultan Husam, as *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed., has it.

- “(b) the province of *Kandahar*, which marches with the Mogul’s dominions and country
“of the Afghans (the first to conquer Persia, who later submitted to Quli Khan),
“obeys Ahmad Shah, a monarch of their own race, just as
- “(c) the Uzbek Tatars have recovered their freedom and are living under an independent
“chief,
- “(d) the province of Lar, which extends from Kirman to Bandar ‘Abbas is ruled by a
“certain Zakharia Khan, one of the rivals of Karim Khan,
- “(e) the countries of Sind, Hurmuz, Masqat, Georgia, Baluchistan and various other
“provinces have their own particular independent princes,
- “(f) all the towns and ports of the Persian Gulf, beginning from the borders of India
“up to Basra—with the exception of *Bushire*—have each their independent Arab
“chief, the principal of whom is a certain Mir Muhanna who has made himself,
“and is considered, very famous because of his piracies at sea, and raids on land
“up to the gates of Shiraz.

“Besides all these persons, in the very part of the country ruled by and dependent on
“Karim Khan there are to be found many other small chieftains and despots, who con-
“stantly infest the roads and plunder caravans without the least apprehension because of
“the inaccessible places in the mountains which they inhabit.

“So your Eminence will see now how much still remains before it can be asserted truthfully
“that Persia has regained its former tranquillity and splendour.

“As to the political rule of Karim Khan it should not be imagined that he is *solely*
“favourable to Jews, Zoroastrians and to Muhammadans of any nationality and sect, his
“main object being to seek every means to repopulate Persia, which has been rendered
“little short of deserted of people, at least in those parts which he possesses: and in truth,
“although up till now he has been unable to induce the Christians emigrated (taught too
“much by the past) to do so, the Persians have not failed to return in large numbers,
“especially those who had taken refuge in Baghdad and Basra, in order to be able to have,
“as previously, *free exercise of their religion according to the sect of ‘Ali, which was not permitted*
“*them in the dominions of the Grand Signor* where those tenets called ‘Sunni’ are professed.

“Since Karim Khan is not of the royal blood, but of low birth and from a race¹ which
“is considered one of the most ignoble in Persia, so far he has not dared to assume the
“title of ‘king’, foreseeing very well that, if he were to do so, he would very greatly alienate
“from their allegiance to him the fickle minds of the Persians, who would call him a usurper.
“For that reason up till now he has only assumed that of ‘Wakil’, which means ‘representa-
“tive’ and with us would be equivalent to ‘regent’. Notwithstanding this real or feigned
“moderation of his, he has been a number of times in danger of assassination² by his
“principal officials themselves, many of whom he was compelled to put to death, or to
“blind—among them his own nephew—of whose arm and valour he had made use till
“then to gain the victories he has done. It is only a few months since Karim Khan was
“seriously ill with an abscess in the inside of the throat, caused, it is said, by his habit of
“using opium to excess. What however more displeases his Persian partisans is that this
“prince is given to consume too much wine, which often makes him choleric and cruel:
“and woe to whoever treads on his corns when his head is heated with it: to cut off noses
“and ears, put out eyes—that is a mere nothing. One sort of execution never hitherto
“seen in Persia, and perhaps less painful but which causes greater terror, is that he has
“brought into use, i.e. of putting the condemned person, well pinioned, at the mouth of
“a mortar (or bomb), and by means of gunpowder blowing him to pieces in the air.

“For about two years past this prince has been expected here with his army, but he was
“detained in other parts, both on account of the rebellion of his own brother, Zaki Khan,³
“as also by the illness mentioned above, which caused fears for his life: and were he to

¹ i.e. he was a Kurd of the small Zand tribal fraction.

² His associate ‘Ali Mardan Khan Bakhtiari, his rival Hasan Khan Qajar, perished in that way.

³ Which must therefore be dated 1763-4.

"have died, what new disturbances would not have occurred!¹ But now, thanks to Divine providence, we understand that he has completely recovered, and is with a strong force in the province of Hawaizeh, the farthest town on the borders of Basra, whence, it is said, he will soon be seen in these parts to subjugate the Arab rebels of the Persian Gulf, more particularly the above-mentioned Mir Muhanna, chief of Bandar Rig. We shall see in the future what he will succeed in doing:² and I shall not fail in due season to inform your Eminence and the Sac. Congregation about it, for such good as can be got of it and serve for the advantage of the missions. . . ."

Then, going on to discuss the inconveniences likely to arise, were he to move up-country to Julfa at that juncture, including the hostility of the schismatic Armenian 'bishop', to whom the civil government had also been entrusted (which will be quoted elsewhere in this chapter), Bishop Cornelius remarked:

" . . . Nor would orders I might be able to obtain from Karim Khan be of service to me, because, firstly, this prince has not yet established his capital in Isfahan, preferring rather to elect to reside in Tabriz, or in Shiraz, where he has for that purpose had a royal palace built. . . ."³

Referring to the above (dated 2.5.1765) as "my last letter, which I had the honour to forward through the ambassador of France", Bishop Cornelius again addressed the Cardinal Prefect on 11.3.1766,⁴ more especially about that postponed expedition of Karim Khan to the littoral, and its ultimate and awkward results:

"It now remains for me to inform you also of the inconclusive expedition, carried out by Karim Khan in this neighbourhood against two rebel Arab chiefs, the one named Sulaiman K'ab,⁵ who during many years past has made himself master of many places in Persia towards the mouth of the river (which comes) from Basra, the other named Mir Muhanna, famous in these parts for his continual piracies at sea and for his raids by land up to the gate of the town of Shiraz. Karim Khan, indeed, came down at the beginning of the summer" (i.e. of 1765) "but without being able to do anything against either the one or the other because, on the pretext that his men were suffering extremely from the summer heat, he led them back with him to Shiraz, leaving the country to the mercy of the enemy. This hasty retreat of the Persian army left the field free to the two rebels to do worse than before. Not only did the first named retake the lands which the approach of the Persian army had made him abandon, but he extended his conquests farther over the territory bordering on Basra (although in the dominions of the Sultan) and—what he showed more courage in attacking—he made himself master of two English vessels, which were proceeding from India to Basra with very valuable cargoes, as also of another, a warship of 12 guns, belonging to the same nation—a thing that he had never dared to do in the past—and that was on the pretext that the English had furnished his enemies with a vessel of theirs (to use) against him. . . ."

"As to the second rebel, i.e. Mir Muhanna, after having forced the English and Persians to withdraw from the blockade, which they had jointly, with their united squadrons, made on an adjoining island⁶ where that rebel had retired with his men, and frustrated all their efforts which for forty successive days of the blockade they had not ceased to

¹ A true forecast as in fact his relatives did quarrel over the succession, and rival chiefs appear.

² Another letter of the same date, 2.5.1765, from the Bishop (*S.N.R.*, VII, p. 347) addressed to the Secretary to the Sac. Congregation, refers to the route Basra-Shiraz being "infested by robbers, the raids of the rebels . . ."

³ The existing Arg-i-Karim Khani.

⁴ Ambassador of France, i.e. at Constantinople: *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 358.

⁵ Also written and pronounced 'Ch'ab', a numerous tribe even to these days living round the shores of the province of Khuzistan, i.e. Persian Arabistan

⁶ Khargu, a low sandy islet separated only by a channel from the higher, more fertile Kharg island.

"make to cause him to surrender: after having with the like success entirely defeated the Dutch who, taking the place of the English, attempted jointly with the Persians from Bushire to effect a landing on the islet in question, where nearly all were massacred, only a few having saved themselves with difficulty by swimming; after all this, the bold, fierce rebel took on the enterprise of driving the Dutch themselves out of Kharg and succeeded in it to our profound disgrace. For, after having captured at sea some of their armed ships, he landed his men on that island" (Kharg) "without opposition and, after a siege of nine days (although without any cannon) he succeeded in making himself master of the township and compelling the fort to surrender at discretion,¹ sparing their lives, but not permitting the Dutch to carry away more than the clothes they had on their backs. Such a conquest renders this savage rebel extremely powerful, because besides 200 pieces of cannon, the arsenal, and a considerable store of war material, which the Dutch Company possessed there, he has now in his hands all the merchandise and money there was there, which is said to amount to about 4,000,000 (four million) without counting the plunder taken from the inhabitants. This capture of Kharg took place on the night of the first day of this year" (1766). . .

Bishop Cornelius then went on to throw light on the relations of Karim Khan with the English East India Company at that time:

"These sinister occurrences, just as they have interrupted all communication with Basra, also prevented me from replying before now to your last two letters, received by me from the Sacr. Congregation some months ago—on 20.2.1765 and 15.3.1765. Before their receipt I had already planned to go to Julfa and—in order not to make a false step—I profited by an English gentleman going to Shiraz to see Karim Khan to send the Father, my companion,² there, in order to obtain from Karim Khan the assurance that I should not be molested by the Armenians. The business, however, fell out altogether to the contrary of my desires and hopes, because the Regent, being disgusted with the English—perhaps for not having succeeded in taming Mir Muhanna, not only declined to give audience to the English delegate, but in addition refused to receive his" (written) "petition,

¹ As quoted *in extenso* in the section of this work dealing with the Carmelite Residence on Kharg, *Cont. Basra Chron.* (i.e. Fr. Angelus Felix writing) gave this version of the surrender:

"However, after he" (i.e. Baron von Knipphausen) "had left the island Mir Muhanna did not cease to harass the Dutch, and again and again reduced them to extremities. While a very dangerous crisis was impending the fourth and last governor there, Mynheer Hontingh, a youth of proved talents but insufficiently experienced or wideawake for the straits of that time, had arrived. Then this craftiest of Arabs" (i.e. Mir Muhanna) ". . . invaded the island, broke through the fortifications with the assistance of treachery, and instantly setting up his tents at the gate of the fort summoned the Dutch governor, as if to make a compact and truce with him, and fix terms of peace. Too credulously Mynheer Hontingh went out of the fort to him, and there Mir Muhanna announced that the position of affairs was now changed, and the wheel of fortune had at length turned to his side, wherefore he (Mynheer Hontingh) should write to his officers and men that they were obliged to leave behind there all their possessions, and evacuate the citadel at once, without their arms. The Dutch garrison had to subscribe to the sentence, hard as it was, in order to escape from the claws of the Arabs. Having received and read the letters of Mynheer Hontingh the Dutch soldiers with downcast eyes . . . two by two issued from the fort . . . and the Arab-Persians joyously entered the foreign 'plantation', to reap the victory without any bloodshed. . . . The booty, which Mir Muhanna carried off, is computed at 30 lakhs" (1 lakh = 100,000 rupees) "of rupees, since, besides the property of the Company, there was much merchandise belonging to other persons put ashore there out of fear of Shaikh Sulaiman" (i.e. the chief of the K'ab Arabs). . . . "The Dutch, despoiled of everything, just covered with the clothes they wore, were sent in light boats to Bushire, whence after several months they proceeded by one of their ships to Batavia. . . . So ignominious an overthrow of the Dutch . . . for there were stationed there more than 100 Europeans to guard the fort, besides two large ships on the seashore with their sails spread . . . which, hardly had the Muhammadan flag been unfurled on the fort, hauled up their anchors and sailed away to Batavia, without waiting for news of their comrades. . . ."

² This is the remark on this international incident, which from another part of Persia Fr. J. B. de Bernardis, O.P., wrote from Julfa, 20.10.1765, to the Cardinal Prefect (*S.N.R.*, VII, p. 319):

". . . Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan wrote from Bushire in August" (i.e. 1765) "that he was about to come to Isfahan, knowing that I had remained alone . . . he had sent a Carmelite Father for Julfa. The latter reached Shiraz in company of an interpreter of the English, a Catholic, but they were obliged by Karim Khan, who was in residence at Shiraz with his forces, to return to Bushire without being able to reach Isfahan. I am not informed as to the motive Karim Khan had had in inflicting this affront on the 'Franks', whom hitherto he had regarded with a good eye. Should he continue to show himself disgusted with the 'Franks' it will afford a motive for the heretical archbishop here to give vent to his ill-will against the Catholics, now that he has entire authority over Julfa. . . ."

"so that he" (the Englishman) "was compelled to return with the Father to Bushire without having obtained anything. From that your Eminence and their Eminences your colleagues can judge whether it be the time for the bishop to proceed to Isfahan. . . ."

" . . . Yesterday there appeared here a small English squadron coming from Bombay consisting of three warships and three or four other armed vessels with troops on board: this squadron is proceeding against Sulaiman K'ab, to make him do amends for his capture of the three English vessels mentioned. I shall not fail to inform you also of the result of this expedition. . . ."

Still from Bushire, almost in the centre of the 'hurricane zone' of those years of complications and changes, Bishop Cornelius wrote again to the Secretary of the Sacra Congregation 15.10.1767,¹ and began by enunciating a truth which many of his predecessors and vicars provincial had overlooked:

"As knowledge of the spiritual state of this Mission, about which I make it my duty to inform you, depends mainly on that of its temporal state, I judge it opportune to give you some news about this. From last May" (i.e. 1767) "onwards until now this town" (Bushire) "has been in the greatest affliction and affright owing to a pure caprice of Karim Khan, who, being given over to wine and women, at the instigation of some buffoons or counsellors of his has had this town blockaded under its walls by some tribes, preventing the entry of provisions and cutting off any communication with the interior of the country, so that without help" (we have had) "from the sea we should have all died of starvation. Not knowing the real motive for an order so harsh and so unforeseen, and fearing lest there should occur here what one month ago happened at Kangun, another Persian port two days' distance from here, which on orders from the same usurper without any rhyme or reason was suddenly surrounded by his troops, who sacked it and after massacring the oldest and the infirm inhabitants took away the rest as prisoners to Shiraz: fearing such a development, I say, the English gentlemen here" (i.e. of the East India Company) "for the safety of their own persons and effects caused two of the men-o'-war to come here, and I on my part took the precaution of sending to Basra the sacred vessels and ornaments of the church, together with the books and other things most necessary for the Mission, so that there might not happen what had recently twice happened to me on Kharg in the loss of our two houses there."

"Now we await the result of the going to the Court" (i.e. at Shiraz) "of the only son of the Shaikh" (of Bushire) ". . . he is the Arab chief, feudatory of the country, who secretly and by paths unknown to others found means to get through" (the blockade) "to Shiraz, with gifts in order to try and bring about an accommodation."

"A little before the straits mentioned supervened, i.e. towards the end of April" (1767), "there had left for Shiraz an English gentleman, accompanied by an imposing and numerous retinue, with the status of ambassador from the" (East India) "Company to the above-named Karim Khan, the object being to bring about through his intermediary and his influence peace with the K'ab Arabs, Persian subjects, and also to obtain" (permission for) "the establishment in Bushire of their trading-house, with all the same ancient privileges they enjoyed in Bandar 'Abbas, which they had abandoned and which now lies in ruins."

"Reckoning on a successful result from this solemn and extraordinary embassy I did not fail to address myself to the envoy in question, my friend, and to beg him to interest himself with the Ruler" (Karim Khan) "there also for the welfare and re-establishment of the Missions in Persia: and he promised me to do so. But to my very great regret and contrary to general expectation after a useless stay of five whole months at Shiraz he was obliged to return to Basra without having been able to obtain anything from Karim Khan, who in the end declined to accept the gifts from the Company brought by him,

¹ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 466.

"alleging as a reason that he had no need of European trade, because that had been the reason for money leaving the country. On the return of a frigate¹ dispatched in haste to Bombay to take the news of this to the Supreme Council there, it will be seen what "decision the English" (East India) "Company will take: general opinion is that, in order to retain the trade in the Persian Gulf, it will be obliged in the end to try and retake "the island of Kharg from the pirate, Mir Muhanna, seeing that the Dutch Company has "no further intention of recovering it.

"From what I have just informed you, and from the small satisfaction displayed by the "people, in particular the nobles and merchants, with the rule of Karim Khan (from which "one may foresee an early rebellion) your Illustr. lordship and the Sacr. Congregation "can easily judge whether it be a favourable time to hope for the re-establishment of the "Faith and missions in Persia. . . ."

The course the English Company took in the face of this attitude of Karim Khan towards them was altogether different:

"14.2.1769. As the English had removed their trading-house from Bushire to Basra, "Fr. Antony Marian from our mission also betook himself hither . . .",

records *Cont. Basra Chron.*: and included in the report of the session of the Sacr. Congregation of 2.4.1770² there is a 'Note' or Minute:

"The English Company having fallen on evil times in Persia, that nation withdrew to "Basra: and for that reason it behoved Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan to retire to Basra with "the rest of his dismayed flock. . . ."

In other words Bishop Cornelius and the Carmelite mission had withdrawn from Bushire by or before the beginning of 1769—and this was substantially the last Carmelite organization working in Persia during that century. The Bishop of Isfahan's explanations and any letters that he may have written in connection with this removal to Basra during 1768–9 have not been traced in the present search, and may have been lost 'in the post', as also that of 12.1.1770 which he quotes in another letter of 20.5.1770,³ written from Basra, from which the following observation is taken:

"For the present there is nothing that occurs to me to communicate to you about affairs "in Persia and the missions: Karim Khan persists in not permitting Europeans to re-establish "themselves in the country, and recover their former trade there. . . ."

From Julfa itself, some months earlier, 20.12.1769,⁴ the Dominican Fr. de Bernardis as Vicar General of the diocese had informed the Cardinal Prefect:

"Here the folk are poor and wretched both in numbers and in worldly goods, but we "have quiet in matters of religion. As to the country Karim Khan is in Shiraz, busy with

¹ This was presumably not the man-o'-war of which *Cont. Basra Chron.* records the disastrous end in that same year, 1767:

"15.12.(1667). Very regrettable news arrived that not far from Bandar 'Abbas an English warship had been totally "burnt out on 15.11.1767, with the loss of 265 men. It had been detached from the tiny fleet which for a long time past "had been in these waters on account of the disputes with the Arabs, Shaikh Sulaiman" (i.e. K'ab) "and Mir Muhanna, "at the instigation of Karim Khan, the ruler of Persia, in order that they should capture and make a prize of an exceed- "ingly ancient vessel formerly belonging to Nadir Shah loaded, as it was thought, with great riches and seized there by "the Arab-Persian rebels, which was lying at anchor near Bandar 'Abbas. The choicest naval units of the English were "put on board, among them both the leading military and civilian officials of the Company, as well as the Resident at "Bushire, Mr. Boyer [*? sic*, for Bowyer] and the second in charge at Basra, Mr. Syster [*? sic*, Chichester]: aided by "favourable winds it had cast anchor in front of the Arab ship, and everything was got ready for the attack, and they had "hardly risen from breakfast, when suddenly their (nitre) powder was ignited by fire, and it (the ship) blew up. . . ."

² *Acta*, 1770, p. 70.

³ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 530.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 563.

"building. Since the putting to death of Mir Muhanna, the rebel and despot of Kharg,¹ "he (Karim Khan) has had entry to Persia opened to traders, and sent for all the scattered "Julfa people, making them large promises. So it is hoped that some Catholic families "too will return, and that the small flock will grow. But he (Karim Khan) is disgusted "with Europeans,² believing that the English befooled him in the operations against Kharg, "in which they had promised to capture the savage tyrant, whereas with 11 vessels they "gained no success at all, and the tyrant was" (finally) "slain by the Turks. . . ."

The tranquillity continued, more or less, in certain parts for some years yet: on 10.5.1772 an Armenian Uniat priest, a former student at the Urban College in Rome, whom in 1760 Bishop Cornelius had taken there, John son of Isaac, gave his testimony:³

"As to the condition of the country, thanks to God, it is quiet and peaceful; we are not "molested by the Muslims: on the contrary they are very pleased for any community to "be here, and allow the free practice of the Christian religion. . . ."

After his retirement to Italy and arrival in Rome, in 1772 Bishop Cornelius of Isfahan drew up a lengthy report⁴ which is headed:

"On the present condition of Persia, and the Missions there: Report presented to the "Sacr. Congregation de Prop. Fide by Mgr Cornelius of S. Joseph, Discalced Carmelite, "Bishop of Isfahan, month of December 1772."

Much of the ground under the section 'Temporal State' had been already covered in similar wording by his report of 2.5.1765 already quoted *in extenso*: here therefore only new historical factors and developments will be set down. For instance, after mentioning the three potentates, among whom the former Persian empire was divided—all surviving, if not flourishing, in 1772—the Bishop added with regard to Shah Rukh and the province of Khurasan:

"This province together with the territories dependent on it after the death of the tyrant "was occupied by the above-named Ahmad Shah, monarch of the Afghans who ceded it

¹ Under the year 1769 *Cont. Basra Chron.* tells the career and end of this pirate, as notorious for daring and cruelty in the Persian Gulf as our Captain Kidds and the buccaneers had been in the West Indies:

"On 25.3.(1769) what Mir Muhanna had sowed he at length reaped at Basra. The second son of Mir Nasir, the Shaikh "of Bandar Rig, in savagery he became so abominable that with his own hands he assaulted and killed his own father, "who was not in the least suspecting such cruelty."

(The diary of the East India Company at Gāmburn on Saturday, 3.8.1754 mentioned. "Mir Nasir, the Shaikh "of Bandar Rik, we hear was killed some time ago by one of his sons: the cause of it is said to arise from the father "taking one of his female Georgian women from him, and giving her to Mynheer Kniphausen"—but that may have been biased anti-Dutch gossip.)

"On this parricide being committed all traders and honest men fled from Bandar Rig, where at that time owing to the "attention of Mir Nasir commerce had been in a very flourishing state, and among them his eldest son, brother of Mir "Muhanna, who finally gained over by the repeated promises of the parricide returned to Bandar Rig, but, when he "had spent only a few months in ruling that township, he met with a very miserable end, not unlike his father's, at the "hands of his brother who was envious of the chieftainship and whose thirst for blood was only slaked by a general "slaughter of his relatives. . . . This Arab-Persian, an object of fear to Turks, Persians and Europeans, puffed up by so "many successful *coups*, ruled in the island of Kharg from 1766 . . . and he began to break out again into such un- "mitigated severities against his own fellow-fighters that they at length grew weary of his rule, and in order to shake "off the yoke broke out in revolt against him: with difficulty he escaped from their hands. with a few of his own people "he took to the sea in a skiff, and not liking to trust himself to the shores of Persia, fled hither" (to Basra): "he had "already made the river" (i.e. the Shatt-ul-'Arab) "and had disembarked in the neighbourhood of Basra, 14.2.(1769), "with the intention of entering the services of some Shaikh of the Arabs in the desert; but the Mutasallim (of Basra) "being forewarned of this immediately got to horse with his guards and cut off the escape of Mir Muhanna, whom "nolens volens he took off to his palace and kept in the inner ward, where he was treated with much respect and kindness "until the Pasha of Baghdad prepared for him a halter worthy of him, in which he had his reward this night" (i.e. 25.3.1769).

² All these circumstantial accounts contradict the usual statement in histories that Karim Khan was the friend of the Europeans—particularly the impression derived from his so-called treaty with the English.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 788, p. 270.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, VIII, p. 6.

"to Shah Rukh in recognition of the friendship there had been between him and his (Shah Rukh's) grandfather, and also out of commiseration for the unfortunate prince having been blinded by the rebels in the rebellions that occurred. The Persians counted on the son of Shah Rukh, as being descended maternally from the Safawi Shahs, to see the ancient splendour of Persia revived. But the prince in question, being too impatient to rule, rebelled against the Shah his father, and took it on himself in the last few years to besiege him" (i.e. Shah Rukh) "in his own capital of Mashhad. When Ahmad Shah" (i.e. the Afghan) "learnt of that, he hastened with his men and obliged the rebel son to take to flight and to wandering over the territories of the Uzbek Tatars."

Then the Bishop of Isfahan added a fresh independent princeling to the list:

"Lastly, the fourth is Prince Heraklios, who professes the same faith of the Greeks as do the Muscovites, his associates in the present war against the Ottoman Porte: he continues to maintain absolute control of Persian Georgia, so-called because it was formerly a province subject to and dependent on Persia. . . .

"As to the other territories and nations made subject to Persia by the conqueror, Quli Khan, they have all, or almost all, recovered their freedom and independence, such as the Tatars, the Bukhariots called Uzbaks, the Arabs of Masqat a town situated on the Persian Gulf, the Indians of the kingdom of Sind, and various other races who out of fear or by force had submitted to the tyrant and been made tributaries of Persia.

"Many other small lords . . . in the interior of the country . . . continue to appear independent. . . . It is true that in these last few years Karim Khan succeeded in causing some of them who by their piracies infested the Persian Gulf to submit, but with small profit because, as he did not have sufficient naval forces, these chiefs were wont to take advantage of the neighbouring islands to take refuge there, and thence to continue as before to disturb those shores and navigation, not respecting European ships even.

"Notwithstanding this, the territory subject to Karim Khan can be considered the most peaceful that at present Persia possesses; he being opposed to bloodshed seeks solely to gain for himself by clemency the liking of the Persians: to cause commerce, which had been suspended, to flourish once more in the country: to bring back the horn of plenty through the cultivation of immense tracts of land abandoned by their owners: to revive the former manufactures: above all else to contrive, by means of exemptions, privileges and repeated invitations, to recall to Persia her former subjects whom warfare and the tyrannies of Quli Khan had obliged to take refuge in other countries in such great numbers that many towns and very many villages remained entirely empty of inhabitants. In the city of Baghdad alone there were to be counted more than 100,000 Persians who had taken asylum there. The refugees in Basra, another town in the Ottoman empire, made up two-thirds of its inhabitants. From that it may be easily conjectured what a great number of Persians had gone with their families to the dominions of the Great Mogul, to Arabia Felix, to Bengal, or to other parts of India.¹ It is sufficient to state that the city of Isfahan, which under the Safawi Shahs was not inferior in the number of its inhabitants to Constantinople, and which, even after the straits suffered there in the invasion of the Afghans and in the seven years of their domination there, notwithstanding that (invasion) still counted (that is thirty years ago—1742) about 500,000 (half a million) inhabitants, now (i.e. 1772), as Persians themselves state, does not have more than 40,000 to 50,000 (forty to fifty thousand).²

"Such was the condition of Persia ten years ago" (i.e. 1762). "At present things seem to me to be changed for the better, and create a hope that they will go on improving in

¹ Many thousands in India of Persians and Armenians by origin date the arrival of their progenitors in India to this period 1742-58.

² Apart from the written evidence in this work of a reduction of the perimeter of the city under the second Afghan Shah, many modern travellers will have observed ruins of walls and buildings for wide distances in the plain of Isfahan. But emigration to the extent stated is noteworthy.

"view of the tranquillity brought in by Karim Khan, so greatly belauded, since he succeeded in subduing divers collections of petty potentates, who were infesting the country and who by their constant exactions and depredations crushed the remnant of that wretched nation. Already very many Persians have returned there with their families, won over partly by the invitations and promises of the Regent, partly on the ground of their religion which, they being of that called the Shiah, they cannot openly profess in the countries under Ottoman domination,¹ where the sect known as Sunni is followed and that of the Persians regarded as heretical. This last time I was in Baghdad" (viz. 1771) "I saw depart for Persia a caravan of about 10,000 persons—men, women, children—so that on good grounds one can hope to see in a few years' time that country re-populated and restored to its pristine splendour, at least as regards the provinces subject to the rule of Karim Khan, of which alone I am able to speak . . . although it is true that of the Christians, who emigrated from Persia (very few of the poorest excepted) there has not yet returned a single person of any standing, for the reason which I shall later on adduce.

"Instead of Isfahan, Karim Khan has established his capital in Shiraz, a town which he has had fortified with wide moats, high walls, and bastions provided with good guns. Besides the royal and magnificent palace he has erected there many other buildings of less size for the lodging of the princes his brothers, and of his chief officials. In addition to the heads of the tribes and towns who have submitted to him he keeps as hostages there the sons and wives of the governors of the provinces as sureties for the fidelity of their fathers and husbands, who however pay for it with their heads in case of any revolt. They are all treated honourably, each according to his own rank and quality, without however being allowed to go outside the gates of the town, which is guarded by a numerous garrison of about 20,000 soldiers.

" . . . The title of 'Shah' he allows to be given to a certain Isma'il,² a prince descended by the mother's side from the royal race of the Safawi. The prince in question is guarded by orders of the Regent in a fort some days' distance from Shiraz with every comfort and means of amusement he can desire, but without being permitted to communicate with persons other than those assigned him for his service, so that he is nothing else than a nominal Shah: authority and command remain in the hands of the Regent, Karim Khan. . . .

" . . . The reasons advanced, then" (by the Catholic flock emigrated and scattered in other countries for not returning) "are:

"(a) fear lest on the death of Karim Khan Persia relapse into its former disturbed condition,

"(b) the interruption of trade since the two Companies, the English and the Dutch, took away their Factories and Residences from Persia,

"(c) the removal of those who, together with their families, had taken refuge, some in Venice and Amsterdam, some in Bengal, some in Madras and other regions of India.

"But, as to the first reason, rather there is a hope that Persia under the rule of the present Regent will be able to regain its former lustre, because of the liking that he (Karim Khan) is increasingly winning from his subjects who, moved by esteem for the father and also for his being of the same 'Ali-ite creed³ as themselves, would prefer to see as successor to the throne his son, a young prince of excellent disposition and inspiring great hopes—as he is becoming generally acclaimed—the more so, if it turn out that the Regent, his father, wishes to have him recognized in his own lifetime as his successor on the death of the above-named Isma'il Shah, whom—as mentioned above—he allows meanwhile to bear the empty title of Shah. If that were to happen, there is no doubt but that there would be re-established in the country, on its former footing, the trade now suspended and that the

¹ Shiah worship in Mesopotamian towns must, then, have been surreptitious at this period.

² This Isma'il 'Shah', who had first dated his reign from 1749–52, had only temporarily been 'dethroned' by Azad Khan, Afghan, in 1756, then?

³ 'Ali-ite = Shiah, from the Imam.

"Directors of the East India Companies, attracted by" (prospects of) "gain, would have "to reopen their Factories—the more so as it was not properly the troubles in Persia that "led to the two Companies named withdrawing from trade with Persia; for the Dutch, "even a few years ago, continued to be in Kharg, an island of the Persian Gulf, and the "English at the port of Bushire."

Then Bishop Cornelius puts forward a remarkable reason in the case of the English East India Company, which does not seem to have been touched in any printed, historical work on this period of history:

"The real cause was that the former" (the Dutch) "had been driven out by a certain "Mir Muhanna, a notorious pirate in rebellion against Karim Khan: while the latter" (the English) "had withdrawn out of a mere point of pique, because the Persian government had "not allowed them to construct, as they claimed for their security, a fort at Bushire;¹ and, "repenting of having done so, *now* according to what people write to me, they seek to come "to an accommodation and settlement. So that it is permissible to hope for their return to "Persia very soon, and for their former commerce to recommence" (at least that of the English): "the English Company cannot forgo the large profit it makes in Persia in the exchange "of cloth from England against silk stuffs from Persia. . . ."²

With the departure of Bishop Cornelius of S. Joseph from the region the fount of information about the internal condition of Persia and its relative political tranquillity dries up almost entirely. Karim Khan Zand, the 'Wakil' or Regent, died in 1779, whereafter a fresh wave of strife and struggle for power and insecurity was to set in until in 1791 the Qajar chief was left victorious and able to inaugurate the dynasty of that name; but the present search has not extended so far; and it only remains to note from the Carmelite *Cont. Basra Chron.* and other letters that in the last years of his rule Karim Khan followed the example of most Safawi Shahs and of Nadir in going to war with Turkey. Designating himself 'French Resident at Basra' in a letter to the Cardinal Prefect Castelli, 22.1.1774,³ a certain Monsieur Jean Rousseau wrote:

" . . . scarcely had plague ceased⁴ in these parts, Monseigneur, than in the month of July "last" (i.e. July 1773) "war broke out, for by orders of Karim Khan, Regent of Persia, who "knew the weak position of the Pasha of Baghdad, the Shaikh of the K'ab came to attack "Basra with galleys and troops. After having burnt all the naval force the Turks had here, "and sacked part of the town he levied a fine on the Turkish administration, and the town "ransomed itself with money. . . ."

It must have been in that connection, and the alarm caused through the unpreparedness of the Turks to defend them, that Fr. Charles of S. Conrad, Vicar Apostolic in the Mogul's dominions, wrote from Basra, 13.6.1774:⁵

" . . . There is still no news of the ships arriving from various ports of India, which some "months ago were lying in the port of Masqat; but there is nothing to fear, neither from "Karim Khan nor from the K'ab, as those ships are not to leave that port except under the

¹ There had been forts of all the foreign Companies at Gāmbūn, until destroyed by the French attack. At Shiraz, in the same letter Bishop Cornelius wrote of the "Factory which the English have made for themselves near the Prince "Alexander of Georgia's, who calls himself a Catholic and in fact tries to show all Catholic travellers special help in their "needs. . . ."

² He was correct—if that was the only reason—for the Armenian Uniat Administrator of the diocese in reports of 20.4.1777 (18.9.1777), which were read in the session of the Sacr. Cong., 7.9.1778, mentioned: "In Bandar Bushire . . . "a short while ago the English made a convention with Karim Khan, hoisted their flag and established a consul. . . ."

³ *S.N.R.*, VII, pp. 596–9.

⁴ i.e. the great plague of 1773 when all the Carmelites in Mesopotamia, including Bishop Emmanuel Ballyet of Baghdad, died.

⁵ *Scrittura Referite nei Congressi*, No. 34, East Indies, 1774–5.

"escort of an English man-o'-war¹ which was to arrive there in the past month of May. "So their lateness is attributed to the winds being contrary. . . ."

He was wrong in his optimism, as the following entries in *Cont. Basra Chron.* show:

"1775. . . . About the middle of March a Persian force, making war on Turks, straitly "besieged this town . . . the people of Basra aimed at nothing more than defending themselves against the 'external' enemy, having no suspicions at all about an 'internal' enemy, "or—as I should rather say—they let themselves be deluded into thinking that the Persians "would at length get tired of the trouble and raise the siege; but they were deceived, as "will appear under the following year.

"26.7.1775. . . . Meanwhile distress and misfortune increased from day to day: the "deariness of corn and all food was rising.

"1776 . . . whatever was being sold was at very high prices: the measure which they "call a 'mān' " (vulg. 'maund') "of wheat and barley was being sold at a price of 20-90 "piastres, meat was not being sold at any price . . . everywhere famine grew, and cats, "dogs, horses, asses, the tops of date-trees did not suffice to assuage that hunger. . . .

"10.4.1776. On this day the town, defeated by the 'internal' enemy, was handed over "to the Persians, and thus freed from the tyranny of hunger fell into the tyrannical hands of "the Persians, to whom the town was surrendered on certain conditions and articles of "capitulation; but the perfidious Persians, having obtained possession of the town, kept "none of the conditions, refused to recognize articles of capitulation or any promises. They "practised, however, unheard tyrannical methods in extracting money. How shall I "describe this tyranny . . . Basra at that time had to witness and suffer! The chief "personages of the town, i.e. the governor with his chief officials, the leader of the Chris- "tians, the principal Turk, the headman of the Jews were taken away to Shiraz in Persia: "in addition Karim Khan, acting as king of the Persians, exacted from this town, already "exhausted, 128,000 Tumans: the sum was apportioned among the divers communities in "the town, and it fell to the share of the Christians to pay 18,000 Tumans, and this sum was "extorted with usury to the last farthing from the inhabitants. I shall say nothing about "the gifts made to General Sadiq Khan, brother of Karim Khan, and his officers. . . .

"1777. In this year the abominable state of affairs grew worse: the Persians, who up "till now had been 'out for' money, being given over to lust beyond measure, began to "want girls also. . . . When the source of money at Basra was dry the perfidious Persians "began to lay ambushes for the Arabs, and so the afflicted people of Basra were not "liberated, but just for so long released from greater oppression and vexations. In the "month of December . . . the Persians destroyed Basra, looted the town and the families "there: and, when we were hoping for better in the following year, the times turned out "worse for us. For the Persians in the interval made war on the Arabs but were defeated "by the Arabs and saved themselves by flight. The victory of the Arabs increased our "miseries, for the Persians wanted to take revenge on the people of Basra. . . ."

* * * * *

Before such an exposition of Persian political affairs and conditions during the period as revealed in the correspondence investigated for this work be concluded, it will be well to add something about those prevalent in that stronghold hitherto of Catholicism, oasis in the of a contingent of hostility and schism—Nakhchiwan—at that date still part of the north- most province of Persia. From Smyrna, 12.10.1752,² Mgr Dominic Salvini, O.P., Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, informed the Sacra Congregation about his diocese that:

¹ An early instance of British policing and patrol of the Persian Gulf.

² S.N.R., VI, p. 11

"The government of it had been claimed by the Afghans who were obliged to surrender "it to the armed might of Heraklios, son of the prince of Tiflis and Kakhetia. The ill-treatment in words and deeds, encountered by them (the Afghans) from the inhabitants "of each and every place through which they passed in their retreat, exasperated them and "caused them to gather at Romi [*sic*], a fortress over against Tabriz, where their Khan was: "and to him they made known the affront they had received from the population and from "him they demanded satisfaction for it. Seeing his troops angered and disaffected the Khan "wanted to satisfy them; but, in order to make his position sure, he sent envoys to Haji, . . . "the head of the Lesghians, a race on the borders of Georgia who profess a brand of Muham- "madanism mixed with idolatry. He made a league with the latter, whereby the latter" (the Lesghian chief) "pledged himself at a certain time to attack the Georgians in the region "of Ganjeh, in order to divert their (the Georgians') attention from Armenia, and so make "it easy to fall on Nakhchiwan. Deeds followed the pact: so that the Georgians, in order to "defend their own country, were obliged to take away their force from Nakhchiwan, "where the Afghans at once entered and made an indescribable slaughter of the people "there, without regard either to sex or to age. Of the two Religious of my Order, who were "there, one withdrew with the Georgians to Tiflis and by way of Akhalsik (?) reached "Erzerum in safety, the other took the road to Bayazid, where he soon afterwards died. "Ten families of our Catholics are sheltering on this side of the Araxes in Akmal and "Tang-i-'Ali, tiny villages in the jurisdiction of Bayazid. The ruination has been general, "both for the Muslims and for the Armenians and Catholics. A fine church, which we have "in Chahuk, remains in its former condition, the others—as they were supported on wooden "structures—have been reduced to ashes, and the convents demolished. I pray Divine "clemency to deign to grant some tranquillity, so that that unfortunate, small remnant of "our Catholicism can live, to its consolation, under the shadow of their ancestral roofs, "or among a community of a different rite, and be able to die in the Lord God with the "assistance of some Catholic priest. . . ."

By a memorandum dated 25.9.1753 the Sacr. Congregation had instructed Archbishop Salvini, O.P., to forward a report on his diocese, and this he proceeded to do with details valuable for purposes of historical statistics and record of the past, and therefore reproduced here: the student may check it with similar reports already quoted in this work in the chapter on the reign of Nadir Shah. There are in fact two reports, one dated Smyrna, 30.1.1754,¹ the other Smyrna, 6.2.1758:² and they have been collated and combined here below. His covering letter included these brave words of a refugee from his see, with a flock so decimated and scattered:

" . . . They (their Eminences) will comprehend from this (report) to what misfortunes "Armenia has been subjected for thirty years past. But, God be thanked, the tree of our "Catholicism has not been so withered that there are not some living roots still left. The "extirpation and destruction wrought by Timur the Lame, and *later by Shah 'Abbas* were "more ruthless: that notwithstanding, the few Catholics, who then saved themselves and "who were fewer in numbers than now, increased so much that they populated those "villages of ours and the whole of Armenia also" (once more), "as I myself witnessed more "than 30 years ago: and I trust it will be the same in the future, if it please the Divine "clemency to grant a stable government. About the two Religious who went to take spiritual "care of those poor Catholics, as I note in this report under No. 10, I shall not fail to inform "you when clearer news comes. . . ."

(Enclosure)

"*Report on the diocese of Nakhchiwan*

"(1) The province of Nakhchiwan is included in Armenia Major, and has as its boun- "daries Sissian on the east, and Kapan on the south: the river Araxes, which divides it

¹ S.R., vol. 778.

² S.R., vol. 778.

³ The Pope's consue.

² S.N.R., vol. VI, p. 376.

"from Media and from the principality of Bayazid on the west: Erivan on the north. In "length it is about 26 hours' march in extent, in width about 8 hours."

(Report of 1758: "The capital bears the same name as the province—Nakhchiwan.")

"(2) In this province the Latin Archbishop has jurisdiction over nine villages—Abranar, "Kushakan, Abrakunis, Chahuk, Karagush, Sapunis, Karna, Santak, Canzak. In addition "in the principality of Bayazid there is the tiny village of Kazzuk under the rock of Maku."

(Report of 1758: "In this province the Latin Archbishop has no suffragan bishops, "and no fixed revenue, but at the time of the grain-harvest, according to usage from "olden time, he issued a general letter of blessing, and, in token of respect, the people "gave him as a stipend in wheat and barley the value of about 4 scudi. In addition "those who got married before their wedding went to receive the blessing of the arch- "bishop and were wont to give him as alms a coin worth 2 paoli.")

"(3) The families thirty years ago" (i.e. about 1742) "totalled 1,800 Catholics. Because "of the savage warfare the majority left the country, so that two years ago" (i.e. 1752) "at the time of the last invasion by the Afghans about 320 remained, of whom many "perished of famine one year ago."

(Report of 1758: "When I was a simple priest, 30 years ago, they reckoned 1,800 "Catholics of Communion age besides about 250 infants and children; but eight years "ago, after having suffered very great losses and borne intense tribulations in the savage "wars, on the barbarous invasion of the Afghans supervening they abandoned their "homeland and all they possessed there, fleeing in troops to Smyrna in order to have the "benefit of the public profession of the Catholic religion, in which they were born. . .")

"(6) The church at Abranar has always served as cathedral.

"(7) There are eight churches" (names of the dedications follow as already given in the previous chapter).

(Report of 1758: "The churches at Abranar and Kushakan, which were already "ill-supported by boards and beams which had perished have now collapsed: only "pieces of the enclosure wall remain.")

"(8) In every village there are either 'Turks' (i.e. Muslims) or heretics. The 'Turks' "have mosques, but do not interfere with the exercise of the Christian religion. The "heretics, who are Eutychians, have churches in Abrakunis, and in Chahuk, and do not "disturb the Latin Christians, in view of the Farmans of the kings of Persia in favour of "the latter. Two of their priests together with 18 laymen a few years ago made a Catholic "profession of faith. In the villages subject to the heretical patriarch there were to be found "Catholics, who from time to time came into our villages secretly to make their confessions "and hear Holy Mass and receive the Holy Sacraments, and then return to their homes.

"(9) The convents of the Dominicans adjoin the churches in Abranar, Kushakan, "Abrakunis, Chahuk, Karagush, Sapunis, Kazzuk, Karna: in Santak, there being only "one family of eight persons, they used to come to Abranar.

"(10) Of the 35 Dominican Religious 7 survive, the others having died: and these seven "in the last looting and sacking of the district fled along with the people. Now that of the "remnant alive in the village of Chahuk, according to the register of names sent to me two "months ago, there have collected more than 140 persons, one priest has been dispatched to "take spiritual charge of them, and another a month ago to look after those in Abranar and "Abrakunis, villages about half an hour's distance the one from the other. Many died of "famine in these two, and of the living about 120 remain in the vicinity of Bayazid, and "another priest has gone to collect them."

(Report of 1758: "Of the 35 I have known 30 are dead"—i.e. two had died in the previous six years—"of the five surviving three are in Smyrna, hearing confessions in "Armenian and preaching a little during the year: the fourth is in Thyatira, a place in "Smyrna, 16 hours away approximately, where there are some few Catholics, natives of "Nakhchiwan: the fifth is in a village three days away from this port, where 18 Catholics, "also natives of Nakhchiwan, live.")

"(11) In the churches the Blessed Sacrament was (always) reserved with a lighted lamp.

"(14) On workdays almost all the population used to come to church at dawn to hear Mass, and those who could not come at dawn would come during the last two hours before noon. Ordinarily every first Sunday in the month they would make their confessions and receive Communion: on the Feast-days the holy Rosary was said, sung aloud at the time of the first Mass.

"(15) Processions took place in public without any interference or signs of contempt from the Muslims, or heretics, such as on Corpus Domini, on the feast of the holy Rosary, Rogation days. . . . The Viaticum was carried to the dying with cross and litanies, and with the same publicity the dead were accompanied to the cemetery appointed for Catholic Christians. N.B.—The villages of Karna, where there is a fine church, Santak and Kazzuk more than a century ago became altogether Muslim, except for one family. They call themselves under the jurisdiction of the Latin Archbishop because they are named in the farmans and privileges granted by the kings of Persia as a favour on the recommendation of sovereign Pontiffs, emperors and kings of France in the past."

(Report of 1758: ". . . The Religious . . . have always kept and preserved registers of baptisms, confirmations, marriages and deaths, as prescribed by the Roman ritual. . . .")

The Vicar Apostolic of Smyrna district in a letter to the Sac. Congregation of 12.5.1754¹ remarked that:

"After the revolutions in Persia the greater part, almost all, of the Catholics of the province of Nakhchiwan fled . . . the majority of them have come and settled in Smyrna and its outskirts. For, besides a large number who have stopped in the city" (Smyrna), "there are at present almost 100 souls in the ancient town of Thyatira, two days by road on horseback from Smyrna; another like number in Adamish, another and new town two days' distance: a few less in Chanir [*? sic*], a large village three days away, and others scattered over the surrounding villages. . . . They have settled with the intention of never returning to Persia,² even should the disorders there be stilled. So they will become subject to this vicariate by surrender on the part of Mgr Salvini who . . . replies that they no longer belong to the Archbishop of Nakhchiwan, but to the Vicar of Smyrna. So far I have employed two Dominicans of the same community in the three places mentioned above; but one of them has recently died . . . and one of the other two is old and in very bad health, incapable, as it were. . . ."

Four years later Mgr Dominic Salvini was still in Smyrna when a minute was made in the Sac. Congregation, 21.8.1758:³

"Archbishop Salvini represents that he will not leave the city of Smyrna without express orders from the Cardinals of the Sac. Congregation: as he is 68 years old, and extenuated in strength, he petitions them for their clemency and permission to retire to his convent at Santa Sabina. . . ."

(On 18.5.1750 already, when he had been 3½ years in Smyrna, Mgr Salvini had asked to be allowed to resign: in their session of 11.8.1750 the Cardinals did not approve of his resigning, and considered that he should remain at Smyrna looking after his flock there.) Now, in consequence of the decision taken, i.e. instructions of 2.9.1758,⁴ the Archbishop wrote to the Cardinal Prefect, 12.1.1759:⁵

¹ S.R., vol. 747, p. 302.

² Many of the Armenian race found round Smyrna—at any rate before 1914 and 1922—may therefore have been of Persian (Nakhchiwan district) origin.

³ S.R., vol. 778.

⁴ The Pope's consent was granted, 21.8.1758.

⁵ S.N.R., VI, p. 489.

"I am ready voluntarily and in due form and by a proper document to give my resignation into the hands of His Holiness of the archiepiscopal see of Nakhchiwan. Next April there is due to sail for Ancona some ship, on which I shall take passage and, if it please God, I shall come (to Rome) in person to make the resignation as indicated, with all the legal formalities requisite. . . ."

Formerly just inside the main door of that great historic church of the Dominican Order on the Aventine in Rome, Santa Sabina, but since the repaving and renovation work of 1936 moved to the aisle on the left, the visitor will see in front of him the slab of a gravestone with the inscription plain for all to read:

D.O.M.
Fr. Dominicus M. Salvini
Archiepiscopus Naxivanensis
Sacri Ordinis Praedicatorum
Obiit X Decembris MDCCLXV (=10.12.1765)
Aetatis Suae LXXVI

That was the end of a line of Latin archbishops in Asia, not *in partibus infidelium*, created in 1318 by Pope John XXII,¹ and of a mission four centuries old, which at one time had counted a whole district of the Armenian flank of the Caucasus, with thousands of peasants,² and numerous Dominican convents its own. The report made to the Sac. Congregation by Cardinal Pamphilj, 7.9.1778,³ has the few, saddening words:

"In Nakhchiwan there are only some few poor Catholics in hiding and for long past deprived of any priest. . . ."

* * * *

 * * *

 * *

Perhaps because of the very fact that the Uniat Catholics had become so dispersed, the missionaries so weak in numbers and disheartened during the last few years of Nadir's rule, at Rome they were prompt in filling the see of Isfahan after the death of Bishop Philip Mary Malachisi. The relative decree of the Sac. Congregation, dated 22.11.1750, reads:

"On his Eminence Cardinal Prospero Colonna di Sciarra putting forward the spiritual needs of the diocese of Isfahan, deprived of its own shepherd owing to the decease of Fr. Philip Mary of S. Augustine, the last bishop, the Sac. Congregation decided that His Holiness should be begged to promote to that bishopric Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret, of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, an apostolic missionary and man greatly recommended by his piety, prudence, teaching and other qualities. That decision having been reported by Mgr Nicolas Lercari, the Secretary, in an audience given, 15.11.1750, His Holiness graciously approved and gave directions for suitable Apostolic letters to be issued on the subject, together with an indult so that the said Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret can receive the conferment of consecration from one sole Catholic bishop in favour and communion with the Holy See—whomever he may prefer—together with the assistance of two secular or regular priests in place of two" (other) "bishops. . . ."

¹ *Vide Hierarchy Latina Orientis*, by Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M.

² As late as J. B. Tavernier, that French traveller saw it in the 1660's with 6,000 Catholics.

³ *Acta* for 1778, p. 309.

Except for one other, then at Bushire or Bandar 'Abbas, Fr. Sebastian happened to be the last Carmelite in priest's Orders left in Persia proper, so low in numbers had that Mission been allowed to fall: and, more regrettably still, he was never replaced: when early in 1752 he quitted Julfa, it was to leave the Carmelite Convent at Isfahan, Residence at Julfa, in the charge of one solitary Lay Brother, Brother Ferdinand of S. Teresa. In his letter of 25.4.1752¹ the new prelate, who was a Piedmontese, explained, after thanks for the honour conferred on him:

" . . . On the arrival of my Bulls,² which for my greater convenience left me at liberty "to go for consecration to whatever bishop . . . I wished, I soon decided, as a good "opportunity by a caravan occurred, to betake myself to the nearest bishop, who is Mgr "Emmanuel, Bishop of Baghdad. Also he had done me the honour to invite me, so that, "when I arrived, I was welcomed by him with considerable marks of affection and religious "charity. Afterwards . . . I was consecrated by him, 16.4.1752, the second Sunday after "Easter, he being assisted by the senior missionaries in Mesopotamia of his Order, Fr. "Fidelis the vicar, and Fr. Constantius, the Bishop's companion: besides them there were "other missionaries passing through Baghdad . . . (two, destined for the Mogul's "dominions, had brought me the Bulls) together with two Chaldaean Catholic priests, "who all had the pleasure of assisting at such a function which was performed very solemnly "in the presence of a great concourse of people and to the indescribable honour of all "Catholics, so that the very heretics were much edified at witnessing such a fine, serious, "becoming and solemn function.

"I enclose the oath taken,³ and the profession of Faith made by me before my consecra- "tion to Bishop Emmanuel, my consecrator. I send it as soon as I can to the Sacr. Con- "gregation, as required by the Bulls: as I also notify you of having taken an oath to observe "the contents of the decree of Alexander VII regarding the residence of bishops. . . ."

He had been allotted the fixed allowance for a missionary bishop's journey to be consecrated, and return to his diocese, 60 scudi, and on this point continued his letter:

"You will allow me to say candidly that that sum would perhaps have sufficed in the "times of peace and quiet in Persia, and when the Messrs. Shariman on such occasions "counted it an honour to add to it of their liberality. But with the great upheavals all "over Persia, and the great misfortune of the poor Messrs. Shariman . . . not even "100 scudi were sufficient for me to reach Baghdad, and I have already spent 100 odd on "the unutterable extortions and forced levies practised in these times of turmoil at the "rah-dars, i.e. the toll-houses and the imposts everywhere. With regard to my return I "think I shall be able to do it for 60 scudi, because, if there are no disturbances or danger, "the caravans will not need a large escort . . . so that I hope the Sacr. Congregation will "complete its favours by adding 40 scudi to the 60 for my coming, and another 60 for "my return, which would make 100 scudi."

This bishop, in his short holding of the see, did not leave the like impression of respect, or capacity of high courage that the other holders make on the reader of their *gesta*. Like most of them he was beset by financial stringency, and in his case from the start almost, and he had to suffer vicariously. True, according to accounts in existence⁴ in the archives of the Order, in conformity with the

¹ S.R., vol. 753.

² *Vide Cont. Basra Chron.* under 29.10.1751: "We received the Bulls sent from Europe for Fr. Sebastian of S. Margaret, "vicar at Isfahan, to be consecrated Bishop of Isfahan."

³ It is given in original as taken by him, in S.N.R., VI, p. 69, dated 16.4.1752.

⁴ *Vide* in O.C.D. an account-book containing "Orders of the Sacr. Cong. to the Monti di Pietà in Rome for payments "regarding the grants to our missions and the allowances to missionaries for the year 1750," p. 61.

'decrees of 22.11.1750 and 19.4.1751 456 scudi were to be paid by the Procurator of the 'Monti di Pietà to the Vicar Provincial of the Mission for the new bishop, being 200 scudi 'as advance of one year's allowance from the date of his consecration, 96 scudi for him to 'provide himself with episcopal robes and pontificals, and 60 scudi for his journey to be 'consecrated, as well as 100 scudi to pay off debts of his predecessor: while on 29.2.1752 'and 1.10.1752 and 6.9.1753 orders were issued for advance payments of 150, 200 and '100 scudi on Bishop Sebastian's allowance.'

But on 1.11.1752 he was writing from Basra¹ to Rome

'greatly afflicted, as he understood the Sacr. Congregation had deprived him of the annual 'allowance allotted him, in order to pay with it the debts contracted by his predecessor, 'Bishop Philip Mary; so that, in order to live, necessity would oblige him at once to begin 'incurring debts and to remain in the house of Religious or of some Christian willing to 'deprive himself in order to do him the charity of keeping him, until fresh funds arrive: '. . . to go to Isfahan when the road opens without any allowance would make it impossible 'for me to stay there. . . .'

After bewailing his hard lot in such a situation, and throwing himself on the pity of the Sacr. Congregation for more liberal financial support of Persian missionary enterprise he pointed out that the late Bishop Philip Mary had not been to blame for expenditure he had to meet: he had been obliged to draw bills in order to fulfil his pastoral office by a visitation of all his vast diocese over a period of two years and two months: then the Sacr. Congregation had commissioned him to have made, regardless of expense, two copies of the version of the Gospels done into Persian by orders of Nadir Shah. He ended this 'money' letter by suggesting that the Sacr. Congregation should allot to two Armenian Uniat priests for the Shariman church in Julfa, who had taken refuge in Basra, the stipends that it had been wont to allocate to the Carmelite missionaries.

By the end of 1752 the civil war and anarchy had already proved severe—on the inhabitants of Julfa especially; but from the first Bishop Sebastian seems—from the correspondence left—to have used every argument against returning there. On 25.4.1752² from Baghdad he wrote to the Cardinal Prefect admitting his own delinquency in sending news, but coupling it with a reproach for lack of interest in the hard-pressed Religious in Persia:

"Fr. Rinaldo Maria, at present the General of my Order, tells me to give news of the "affairs of the mission to the Sacr. Congregation. I shall do it very willingly and I should "do it much more willingly and frequently, were some reply given to mine. In this con- "nection I intend to comply by telling them what I and the other missionaries in Isfahan "suffered during these last years.

"I suppose the Sacr. Congregation will have learned only too well how, in addition to "the great famine" (endured) "all the churches were forcibly despoiled of those few orna- "ments and silverware that they had: how they³ compelled us to pay 400 scudi in cash and, "as we had not that money, I as the best known and accredited was taken and taken again "to the Tribunals, and put in prison, until I obtained a loan and paid the unjust imposition "on account of all concerned. . . ."

In July 1752⁴ Bishop Sebastian wrote to the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation:

"The turmoils and revolutions and extortions in Persia do not cease. In consequence "I continue to remain in Baghdad having been unable, in spite of many attempts made to

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 756.

² and ⁴ *Idem*, vol. 753.

³ This was towards the end of 1751, when the Lurs and Bakhtiariis took Isfahan by assault.

"go to my diocese, nor for the same reasons is there any hope that I shall be able to go there soon. So, for my conscience' sake, I have thought it well to send your Illustr. lordship confidentially the enclosed petition . . . to obtain permission for me to stay in places nearest the borders of my diocese—in Baghdad, Basra or Surat, where also those belonging to my bishopric have taken refuge . . . and for me to use pontificals, at least to consecrate the Holy Oils, at Basra, a place more convenient for that object and where the greater number of my flock have collected, whence I can easily send the Oils to all the missions of my diocese of Isfahan, and to those in the diocese of Mgr the Bishop of Baghdad.¹ Otherwise, as there is no other Latin bishop but myself, we shall be obliged to have the Holy Oils brought with difficulty and after much delay from India or Europe. . . ."

This request was allowed after consideration in the session of the Congregation, 13.11.1752, by the Pope granted 26.11.1752, but the exercise of functions and use of pontificals by the Bishop was to be subject to consent by the Bishop of Baghdad, Ordinary of the diocese for Basra. Bishop Sebastian of S. Margaret had an elder brother, also a Discalced Carmelite, Fr. Hyacinth of S. Teresa, whom—presumably immediately after hearing of his own appointment to the bishopric—he had invited to join him (Fr. Hyacinth reached Aleppo, 30.5.1752, on his way East.²) On the very day of his consecration, 16.4.1752, i.e. in advance of Fr. Hyacinth's arrival at Baghdad, the new Bishop wrote out letters patent³ appointing Fr. Hyacinth⁴ his Vicar General: and this appointment was to lead to further unfortunate friction, after Bishop Sebastian's death more especially, both in Baghdad and Basra. Indeed, the reader today cannot fail to be unfavourably impressed by the style and matter of the letters of Fr. Hyacinth, apart from complaints in *Cont. Basra Chron.* and by two bishops, so the appointment did not prove beneficial.

Not content with the concessions given and the hospitality and assistance afforded him by Mgr Emmanuel Ballyet, the new Bishop of Isfahan by a petition and enclosure of 14.1.1754⁵ was so tactless as to ask—on the ground that Persia was plunged in such turmoil, and Isfahan and Julfa had been sacked by tribesmen, and many of his flock in consequence refugees in Basra—that Basra be cut out of the diocese of Baghdad and annexed to that of Isfahan, when Hamadan could be given to Baghdad in exchange.

Acknowledging receipt of the intimation through the Praepositus General of the Order, Fr. Rinaldo Maria, that permission had been given him by the Holy See to reside in Basra, Bishop Sebastian continued:

" . . . which has relieved me of all scruples. So I left Basra . . . for Bushire to be at hand in order to see whether it were possible for me to penetrate to Isfahan, and I stopped (in that place of Arabs, thieves and cruel men, and suffered the limit of suffering) for five months and more: I had to endure more trouble than ever by reason of the claims put forward by many persons in that country: and these claims compelled me to run away and return here to Basra in order not to expose myself to further and evident risk of life. . . . For that reason, after having reflected deeply and committed myself to God, I determined to draw up the enclosed memorial and pray your Illustr. lordship to arrange so that there be granted me what I ask. . . . To me it appears just and reasonable that, as Mgr the Bishop of Baghdad has the town of Hamadan in my diocese as a place of refuge against a time of disturbances in Baghdad, I also might have in Basra a place of refuge in these days. . . . I willingly make it over, and am agreeable that Hamadan be amalgamated

¹ Bishop Emmanuel was leaving for Rome on a visit *ad limina*.

² *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 83, letter of a Dominican of 31.5.1752.

³ Given in *S.N.R.*, VI, pp. 245, 249, 252, 256.

⁴ Mgr Sebastian styled his brother in this. "Vicar Provincial of the mission in Persia", whereas in the report by Cardinal Ursini in the session of the Sac. Cong., 8.8.1757, he is "Fr. Hyacinth of S. Teresa, who . . . had gone out to the missions of Persia with the title of *Vicar of Julfa*, and by the Bishop had been declared his Vicar General." This strangely worded document also refers to Fr. Hyacinth as 'having arrived safe and sound' (whereas he had not left Aleppo at the time of the consecration) and states, "by the consent and permission given by the Fr. General" (of the Order) "and handed to me . . . you can accept this prelacy! . . ."

⁵ *S.R.*, vol. 759, app. p. 258, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 181, 29.12.1753; p. 207, 14.4.1754.

"to Baghdad: and vice versa I beg the Sacr. Congregation to attach the town of Basra to Isfahan (diocese), now that almost all my flock has taken refuge here; otherwise what is the use of my being a bishop and not being able to perform episcopal functions here in Basra. . . . I hope for a favourable reception to this petition, which would remove to some extent my bitterness and sadness at seeing that the Sacr. Congregation has deprived me for three years of my allowance. . . ."

(He also asked, as a minimum, for the title of Vicar Apostolic, or Delegate, while at Basra.)

From the records available Bishop Emmanuel of S. Albert (Ballyet) was one of the most active missionary workers the Carmelites had in their Eastern missions during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: a man of great capacity (his brother Fr. Symphorian, too, had been Praepositus General of the Order), evidently in touch by correspondence with Rome and France: no other Carmelite bishop was able to make three or four journeys to Rome and France as he did during his long term of office, and be absent, on long journeys often, for more than ten years from his residential post. More still, he was a staunch Frenchman: and this happened to be a period when the French were at war, and pursuing a forward policy in the East, too: he never lost sight that the endowment of the diocese had been provided by a Frenchwoman for a French bishop, and he deemed himself in charge of a French see as if in France. Just as he was the Carmelite who was chiefly responsible for putting Mesopotamian missions under French official patronage and for obtaining his own nomination as consul of France, so he regarded such a proposal, put forward by a non-Frenchman too, to detach a portion from a diocese as *lese-majesté* against France. One main result was to make him hereafter regard his brethren, the bishops of Isfahan, with an *oeil jaloux*—it antagonized him.

The Sacr. Congregation had passed on to him the proposal for comments, while he was in Paris after his visit *ad lumina*. Those comments to the Cardinal Prefect, 20.9.1754,¹ were trenchant and caustic:

"The letter, with which your Eminence honoured me, reached me a few days ago, because it was addressed to Besançon, my native place, whence it has been sent on to Paris.

"I have been extremely surprised at the proposal of Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan, who desires to exchange the town and district of Hamadan in his diocese for the town of Basra, which is in mine—and that upon the pretext that several families from Julfa, his flock, have withdrawn to Basra.

"(a) I have the honour to inform your Eminence that the number of Catholic families from Julfa, which have withdrawn to Basra is limited to five or six,² in addition to some twenty heretical (families). If this motive sufficed to make such a change, Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan would have many more of his flock" (in Baghdad) "to lay claim to the city of Baghdad, seeing that all the Armenian Christians of Hamadan, without exception, have taken refuge there, besides a quantity of families from Julfa and other places in his diocese.

"(b) From Hamadan to Baghdad, there will not be found one single Christian. The house, the church at Hamadan have been entirely destroyed, the town itself is in ruins to such a point that there are not 200 inhabitants to be found. So I leave your Eminence to judge of the justice of such a proposal. . . . If the Bishop of Isfahan doubt for a moment what I am expounding, why does he

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 759.

² These figures are quite at variance with Bishop Emmanuel's own report dated 15 Kal. February 1753 to Pope Benedict XIV, printed in Rome, 1753 (*S.N.R.*, VI, p. 123).

" . . . Now (1753) on account of the Armenian refugees from Persia their number has so increased that there are about 200 families, of whom 160 are heretics with a bishop and priests—they have no church and some years ago asked permission of the government to perform their rites in a small room: the remaining 40 families are Catholics, partly of the Armenian rite, partly of the Chaldaean rite. They have only one single Armenian Catholic priest from Julfa, whom the Carmelite Fathers keep with them."

"not go and reside in Hamadan, a place in his diocese, where he has entire jurisdiction? . . .

"(c) . . . Basra . . . has always been a place for refuge for missionaries persecuted at Baghdad, and that on account of the considerable trade the (French) Royal Company of the Indies carries on there, and because it protects us efficaciously. "If I were to agree to the proposal of Mgr the Bishop, I should no longer have a place of refuge in my diocese. . . .

"(d) Your Eminence is too well acquainted with the position not to perceive that the proposal of Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan is altogether against the interests of France, which would never consent to such a dismemberment to the hurt of her subjects in India, who trade at Basra under her protection,¹ and by whom the mission up till now has always² been supported: and that I could never accept it without incurring the displeasure of the king, my sovereign, who has honoured me with the office of consul in order to sustain my status as bishop, both at Baghdad and at Basra, and to be of use to his subjects, who trade there.

"(e) Since the Bishop of Isfahan has so much zeal in searching for his scattered flock, he has no need to leave his own diocese: he can go all along the coast of the Persian Gulf, and will find a quantity of them at Bandar 'Abbas . . . where Europeans dwell in safety, and carry on their commerce, and where the Discalced Carmelites have a mission on which Fr. Urban of the province of Turin has worked for a long time past. In addition to that there are also Bandar or Bushire, and Bandar Rig, where there are a number of Armenian and even Dutch merchants. There M. the Bishop can retire in safety and retain his residence in his diocese. . . . I who live in the middle of my diocese and rule it by myself have no Latin 'subjects', save the French at Basra, who cannot be protected at Baghdad except by Frenchmen. . . .

"As your Eminence honoured me with your protection in Rome in recommending me to our Holy Father, the Pope, I take the liberty of telling you that I was accorded at the "Court" (i.e. Paris) "a distinguished reception by the Ministers. Last Sunday I had the honour to be presented to the king by M. the Privy Seal. His Majesty" (i.e. Louis Quinze) "to whom I had the honour of presenting my compliments gave me a most gracious reception and has already given orders to the Ministers to obtain for me the greatest protection in my diocese. I hope to finish my business next month, and then I shall go and spend some time at Besançon, my birthplace, and betake myself to Marseilles before the end of the winter, in order to embark and proceed to my diocese. . . . I have the honour to be, Monseigneur, your Eminence's most humble, most obedient servant, Fr. Emmanuel de S. Albert, Bishop of Baghdad. . . ."

The trouble caused to the Sacr. Congregation by the inconsiderate proposal of Bishop Sebastian did not end with that crushing reply, for a Memorial³ sent by the Bishop of Baghdad to the French Ministers was handed by the French ambassador in Rome to the Cardinal Prefect:

"On the pretext of being unable to remain in his diocese because of the disturbances in Persia the Bishop of Isfahan has requested the Sacr. Congregation de Propaganda Fide to separate the town of Basra from my diocese in order to retire there, as if it were a place within his own jurisdiction. The Sacr. Congregation has written to me about it. I have replied that I should never consent to such a dismemberment, which would be not only

¹ But see *Cont Basra Chron.* for 1763, already quoted: ". . . The French . . . so long as their trade is inactive, as it is up to today. . . ."

² Readers of this work will have noted that the mission at Basra was financially dependent on the Portuguese up till the 1650's, and only in 1670 was French assistance in Constantinople invoked by Fr. Angelus.

³ *S.R.*, vol. 759.

"contrary to the decrees of Urban VIII and Benedict XIV but, further, harmful to the trade of the French, who have commenced business with Basra and who would never submit to the jurisdiction of an Italian bishop so long as they possess, and have the right to have, a bishop who is French and at the same time consul for France. I therefore beg your Excellency to be so good as to write a letter on this subject to Monsieur le Marquis de Steinville, so that he may oppose the steps taken by this Bishop and ask for his departure from Basra, where he has been residing for 2½ years, although he might withdraw in all security to various ports in the Persian Gulf—Kharg, Bandar 'Abbas, Bushire . . ."

In making his request it will have been noticed that Bishop Sebastian of Isfahan wrote of his having visited Bushire to investigate possibilities for his journey up-country to Isfahan, and his concluding in the negative. On 17.5.1753 with his brother, Fr. Hyacinth, he left Basra (where they had jointly arrived, 5.7.1752).¹

To Mgr Lercari, Secretary of the Sac. Congregation, 23.12.1753,² Fr. Hyacinth explained from Basra:

" . . . News having come from Persia which appeared at first sight somewhat good, in the month of May last both together on an English ship we left for Bandar Rig and, after giving a mission there for about forty days, we arrived at Bushire . . . where also a mission was given and, thanks to the Lord, to the spiritual profit of those Catholics who were there passing through it; and after staying at Bushire for five months and more, always in the hope of being able to go on to our Residence at Isfahan, at the end of the season in the month of October 1753 such bad news came from Julfa and Isfahan that it was no longer practicable for us to penetrate as far as there . . . it is absolutely no longer possible for a long time, and for many years (God knows when) to go and dwell there, for the reason that all Christians, on account of the constant executions and the danger of being enslaved and even losing their lives, are running away. . . . The truth is, most reverend Mgr Lercari, that it was a real providence of God that Mgr Sebastian and I have escaped being made prisoners, and even worse. . . . Humanly speaking, we both should have been in the midst of the furnace, if the Lord had not inspired Mgr Sebastian . . . to wait for the end of the campaign and the issue of the civil war. . . . So that we have been preserved by a particular grace of Heaven from such risks, having been obliged to run away" (i.e. from Bushire) "and to return and take ship for Basra."

(He ended by an inopportune advocacy of the addition of Basra to the diocese of his brother—in advance, in fact, of the Bishop's official petition of the following January.) The reader will find the spirit of this very far removed from that which animated the early Carmelites at the time of the martyrdom of the converts, or from that of Fr. Basil of S. Francis' journey on foot from Isfahan to Bushire in disguise in 1623, the poverty and hardships he faced.

Cont. Basra Chron. noted under 5.10.1753 the return of the Bishop and his brother, "Vicar of Julfa"³ to Basra from "our House at Bushire" so that the building purchased by Fr. Urban in 1745 was presumably still maintained. About eighteen months later, 22.6.1755, there came the entry:

"After several days' illness Mgr Sebastian of S. Margaret, Bishop of Isfahan, died and we buried him in the church on the following day."

His brother, Fr. Hyacinth, 30.6.1755,⁴ communicated the news to the Secretary to the Sac. Congregation:

¹ See *Cont. Basra Chron.*

² *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 184.

³ The chronicler appended the observation:

"Fr. Hyacinth, Vicar of Julfa, added in the books of the House: 'after carrying out a mission for 6 months in Bushire, 'Bandar Rig and island of Kharg,' and (caustically), 'it is to be noted that at that time the Dutch had not yet occupied 'the island of Kharg' no one else but Muhammadan Arab-Persians lived there: in Bushire and Bandar Rig one or two 'Catholics might be found. . . .'"

⁴ *S.N.R.*, VI, pp. 246, 250, 257.

"... my dearest brother, Mgr Sebastian, Bishop of Isfahan in Persia, who after about 40 days [? sic] of very painful illness and loss of blood¹ gave up his soul to his Creator on 22.6.1755 at 5 p.m., aged 42, and after 15 years in the mission. On 18.6.1755 he himself asked me for all the holy Sacraments and I heard his confession, and gave him the Viaticum, and on the morning of the 22nd about 8 o'clock I gave him the Holy Oils, he being still fully conscious: and really he died the death of a saintly missionary. . . . How much he is mourned by all the people I cannot express, and the sorrow and universal regret was enormous. At his burying, in fact, the heretics showed their veneration . . . by being present at the funeral functions, which I conducted. The consul for England, or English ambassador, at his own expense had made for him a coffin lined with black cloth, with his name inscribed on a stone, and paid all the expenses of the funeral, being present in person at the obsequies in grand parade and with a numerous retinue. It is very certain that his death has been most felt by me, because I have lost the dearest thing I had in the world. . . . I have always been his vicar-general for all his diocese of Persia by virtue of his letters patent issued in my favour on the day of his consecration (a copy of which I send enclosed). . . . As to what was found belonging to him I send the list. Thank God he left no debts, and was found to have 30 Roman scudi, which had been alms offerings received from the people. I had to pay the doctor 10 Roman scudi, and 5 scudi for medicines. I distributed 5 scudi to the poor, 10 scudi are for Masses. . . .

"Inventory. 1 mitre: 1 gilt silver ring with a crystal stone: 2 silk chasubles of all the usual colours, much used: 1 episcopal cross of gold: 2 silk gloves: 2 silk stockings: 2 shoes and an episcopal staff of gilded wood: 1 worn carpet: 2 quilts.² The rest of what he needed he was wont to use from our mission at Basra. He was buried by me . . . garbed in the best episcopal garments he was found to possess, i.e. socks, shoes, rochet, mozzetta, and cape. . . ."

Fr. Cornelius of S. Joseph was at the time

"at Basra, where I was staying in my capacity as Vicar Provincial of Persia . . .";

and in a letter of 20.12.1755³ from Aleppo to the Cardinal Prefect he later described it as a

"death deplored by all those Christians of ours because of the amiable qualities which the deceased prelate possessed. . . ."

Cardinal Ursini's report in the session of the Sacr. Congregation on 8.8.1757 mentioned that

"in 1755 the post of Vicar Apostolic for the Mogul's dominions being vacant, he" (i.e. the late Mgr Sebastian) "proposed for it his brother, Fr. Hyacinth of S. Teresa . . . but the

¹ Perhaps typhoid or dysentery.

² "Fr. Hyacinth, his brother, took sole charge of the effects" (*vide* Fr. Cornelius, 20.12.1755, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 234). Dispute was to arise about the right to them later, and according to *Acta* for 1760, p. 149 (session of 17.3.1760), Mgr Cornelius, by then bishop himself, asked for a decree to compel surrender, and was told in reply that he could, if necessary, make use of canonical laws on the subject in order to effect recovery. But, by his letter of 10.9.1762 (*S.N.R.*, VII, p. 73) Bishop Cornelius informed the Cardinal Prefect:

"On my arrival at Basra I took great pains to find out with whom are the pontifical ornaments, such as pastoral staff, mitres, chalices, crosses and other things belonging to the 'chapel' of the bishop, my predecessor, brought from Isfahan to Basra by the late Mgr Sebastian of S. Margaret. But to my very great regret I understand that everything was taken with him to Surat by his brother; so that now, lacking those necessary articles and any means of obtaining them, I find myself unable to perform the functions required by my office. . . . I have to do with a Religious of my own Order who is in a distant country. It would be necessary for the Sacr. Congregation, in addition to its decree on the subject, to support me by sending a letter of remonstrance to Fr. Hyacinth so that . . . he defer to your orders and send back to me what might concern the bishopric of Isfahan, not that regarding the vicar apostolic for the Mogul's dominions, in whose favour the Father has disposed of it."

³ *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 284.

"Sacr. Congregation did not agree to the proposal and conferred the post of Vicar Apostolic for the Mogul's dominions on the Bishop himself. . . ."

On his way back from Rome the Bishop of Baghdad heard the news at Aleppo, 4.9.1755,¹ and at once wrote to Rome:

"I presume the Sacr. Congregation will not think of appointing a successor, seeing that there are hardly any Christians left in the whole of Persia, and the warfare continues more severely than ever, without any hope of peace . . .":

he was so interested, indeed, that less than three months later, still from Aleppo, he began a letter of 2.12.1755:²

"This is the fourth letter that I have the honour to write to your Lordship to inform you of the death of Mgr Sebastian, Bishop of Isfahan. I presume the Sacr. Congregation will not give him a successor so long as the disturbances in Persia continue. . . ."

But he went on to suggest the name of Fr. Fidelis of S. Teresa, Vicar at Baghdad, should a new appointment be made. When the Sacr. Congregation met, however, on 8.8.1757 and Cardinal Ursini reported³ the question, in addition to Fr. Hyacinth (vicar-general)'s recommendation of the early appointment of a successor, the Cardinal observed that

"the (arch)bishop of Nakhchiwan had quitted Persia a long time ago, so that the whole of that very vast country remains without any Catholic bishop. Further the Fr. Procurator of the Discalced Carmelites—in the name of his superiors—begs the Sacr. Congregation to be pleased to honour his Order⁴ with that bishopric, and proposes in the first place Fr. Cornelius of S. Joseph, a Milanese aged over 47: and Fr. Fidelis of S. Teresa from Novara, aged 50, both of the province of Lombardy and with 16 years or more in the missions, upright, of good reputation, setting a good example and perfect in oriental languages, having been seminarists at S. Pancrazio. . . . The rescript was worded: 'His Holiness to be consulted about the appointment of Fr. Cornelius of S. Joseph to the vacant see.' . . ." and "in an audience given on 15.8.1757 His Holiness graciously approved the opinion of the Sacr. Congregation reported to our lord Pope Clement XIII by Mgr Nicolas Antonelli, the Secretary. . . ."

Fr. Cornelius was duly promoted in the consistory held, 2.10.1758.⁵

Joseph Reina, from Milan, born in 1710, the seventh and last Latin Bishop of Isfahan (it had been a bishopric in the Sasanian era) was evidently of very different stamp and gifts to Bishop Sebastian: to mention one point, his long reports and letters are a delight to read for their polished phrasing, yet clear and direct style, the neat handwriting and, above all, for their understanding of Persian personalities and current events in Persia, which he made it his business to set down in praiseworthy detail, so that they are a mine of information. The whole purpose of his term of office was to give satisfaction: his long reports, he began his letter of 2.5.1765, had no other motive

"except to have the satisfaction of hearing that the Sacr. Congregation are content with my work."

¹ *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 201, letter of 8.9.1755.

² *S.R.*, vol. 773, p. 279.

³ *Acta* for 1757, p. 321.

⁴ *Vide* also in *S.R.*, vol. 773, p. 275, a memorial to the secretariat of the Congregation:

"The Procurator of the Discalced Carmelite Missions, your humble petitioner, represents that the episcopal see of Isfahan in Persia is vacant on account of the death in Basra of Mgr Sebastian of S. Margaret, and at the same time humbly prays that the Sacr. Congregation will deign to appoint another from his Order, so many times favoured by the Sacr. Congregation in the appointment of bishops, who have always been useful and exemplary in that mission from its first inception. . . ."

This was a remarkable divergence from the attitude of the heads of the Order, opposed to all prelacies, in the 1630's.

⁶ *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 426.

He had already been proposed¹ for the bishopric among the three names put forward for the previous election in 1750: he was Vicar Provincial for the "Persian" mission of the Carmelites when, 10.9.1754, letters patent from the Praepositus General of the Order were received at Basra transferring him in a like capacity to their missions in Syria. At the beginning of 1755, still in that position, he had been to Kharg island to meet Fr. Urban: he had returned to Basra after Easter: on 14.9.1755 he left Basra for Aleppo to take up his new appointment:² he had arrived at Baghdad, 30.11.1755.

The *Acta* of the Sacr. Congregation for 1759 give as reported in the session of 20.11.1759 that:

"Fr. Cornelius of S. Joseph, Bishop-elect of Isfahan, by his letter of 26.5.1759, when "acknowledging receipt of the pontifical Bulls and faculties transmitted to him for him to "be consecrated by any Catholic bishop and in whatever place most convenient for him, "sets out that he had chosen the town of Malta for the main reason that at Alexandretta, "whence he was writing, the opportunity of an Imperial ship returning to Leghorn and "due to call at that island had offered itself. Then, by another letter of 10.10.1759, he "writes from Cagliari in Sardinia that the vessel in question had been surprised by a Prussian "privateer near the straits of Bonifacio and taken into Cagliari, where he succeeded in "being set at liberty together with all the passengers who were on the ship. In that state "of affairs he had been welcomed with every kindness by Mgr the Archbishop and favoured "with singular expressions of esteem by the Viceroy" (of Sardinia) "and by the people "there: so, he says, he had decided to receive consecration from the Archbishop there. "As an additional reason he stated that on board the same ship there had landed at that "port a Jew from Smyrna, very wealthy and respected by his folk, who was to receive holy "Baptism from Mgr the Archbishop and their prelate, who having freshly entered on his "charge counted on being able to perform them as events out of the common. . . . He "submits that, when his consecration has taken place, he cannot do less than proceed to "Rome, in order to profit by the proximity in order to bring with him two youths to be "placed in the Urban College, and to consult with the Sacr. Congregation and with the "heads of his Order on various points important for the welfare of the missions. As there "was in that port an Imperial ship well fitted out, and dispatched to those waters precisely "to go in search of the Prussian privateer, a passage to Leghorn has been tendered him "gratis, but he asks for the approval of your Eminence. The two youths, whom he is "bringing with him, are a Persian³ and a Melkite Greek, to whom a place was assigned "in the College in 1757. . . ."

Mgr Cornelius appears to have arrived in Rome before 9.1.1760.⁴ Before his consecration he had not been asked by his consecrator to take the oath required by the decrees of Popes Alexander VII and Clement XI:⁵ during his stay in Rome he was requested by the Secretary to the Sacr. Congregation to make good the defect, but demurred, and finally left Rome at the end of May for Milan without having taken the oath. This involved him in difficulties and correspondence, for after his arrival in his native city, 21.6.1760, he was handed by Cardinal Pozzobonelli, the Archbishop, a notification of 7.6.1760 from the Sacr. Congregation menacing him with penalties. He at once complied and took the oath, the document (*vide S.N.R.*, VI, p. 608) being transmitted to Rome by the Cardinal Archbishop, 25.6.1760. In making humble apologies,⁶ and expressing his obedience, Bishop Cornelius explained that he had demurred

¹ *Vide S.R.*, vol. 773, p. 275.

² *Vide Cont. Basra Chron.*

³ This was John, son of Isaac, afterwards a Uniat priest at Julfa in 1773.

⁴ When—see *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 251—he wrote to Mgr Marefoschi, the Secretary, that he had been permitted to stay at the Carmelite convent of the Vittoria, and asked for a carriage to call on the Cardinals.

⁵ Decrees of Alexander VII and Innocent X prohibited bishops dependent on the Sacr. Congregation de Prop. Fide from using pontificals, even with the Ordinary's consent, in other dioceses than their own—this was to minimize any tendency for newly consecrated bishops particularly to escape going to the mission-field, or remaining there.

⁶ Bp. Cornelius, Milan, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 606; *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 612, 25.6.1760; draft reply from the Secretary, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 613.

on a point of conscience—the decrees lay down that a bishop-elect *before* consecration shall take the oath: to take it afterwards, owing to neglect in informing him of the obligation and not by his own fault, appeared to him to involve an inversion of order, and he thought the verbal assurances given by him to the Secretary would suffice. But the threat of penalties he found misplaced because—in regard to the obligation on oath to return to his convent in case of resignation—the Cardinal Prefect and Congregation might have been aware of his repugnance in accepting, and repeated requests to be spared the burden of episcopal dignity, so that he would a thousand times rather have the poorest cell in a convent.

At the beginning Mgr Cornelius took up a similar line as his predecessor, and soon after his arrival in Rome—according to the *Acta* of the session of 17.3.1760,¹ when Cardinal Antonelli reported that:

“Mgr Cornelius of S. Joseph, Bishop of Isfahan, at present in Curia” (i.e. in Rome) “makes the following requests:

“(a) as he cannot reside in Isfahan, Julfa or any other place in his diocese subject to the Persian empire in view of the present disturbed condition of that country, he begs to be allowed to stay in Basra. . . .

“(b) as there are in Basra two Armenian priests from Julfa and many Armenian Catholic families, also refugees from Persia, the Bishop requests that he may be permitted to use pontificals . . . and to bless the Holy Oils.

“(c) a decree to be issued by the Sac. Congregation declaring Kharg island to belong to the diocese of Isfahan. . . .”

The rescript granted allowed him to stay at Basra and use pontificals for three years, provided the Pope permitted and the assent of the Ordinary (i.e. the Bishop of Baghdad) were obtained: while Kharg was assigned to Isfahan. The Pope gave his approval, 23.3.1760. The new Bishop struggled also to obtain more liberal grants of money from the Sac. Congregation on the ground of his having taken John son of Aratun from Basra to Aleppo and then sent him to Leghorn and maintained him for a year in 1758, and brought John son of Isaac with him to Rome, at some expense: on account of expenses over his consecration: for building the church and hospice on Kharg island, unfinished then,—heretic Armenians had even lodged their priests in it² (these applications were considered in the session of 2.6.1760): the more so because he asserted from Milan, 2.8.1760, that he was unable to make the return journey without more funds. He does not appear to have obtained more than the usual consecration and journey expenses, and an advance of 100 scudi in regard to the young Armenian students: nothing for the Kharg project, which was noted merely ‘lectum’; but during his tenure of the see the correspondence is pleasantly free from complaints about stipends and money.

“After various delays—in Tripoli for three months on account of plague in Aleppo: then for six months in Aleppo because of no caravan being available: lastly for another four months in Baghdad because the death of the famous Sulaiman Pasha led to an upheaval in all the surrounding country—I got to Basra, safe and sound, on 14.8.1762,”

wrote Mgr Cornelius. Several letters, which he mentions³ having

‘dispatched to the Cardinal Prefect from those various stages were presumably lost in transit, for he mentions this as being the sixth written since he got back to the Levant: it was the more painful to him therefore that he heard by letter from a Dominican Father at Mausil that the Sac. Congregation was dissatisfied with him, complaining that he had not written since his arrival in the East, and so they had suspended remittance of his allowances. As

¹ *Acta* for 1760, p. 149, and *S.R.*, vol. 785, p. 273.

² See: 14.1.1760, *S.R.*, vol. 784, p. 143; 19.1.1760 *Acta*, 2.6.1760, *S.R.*, vol. 785, p. 270; and *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 217; 2.8.1760, *S.R.*, vol. 787; *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 374, 15.9.1760.

³ Letter of 10.9.1762, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 73.

'soon as he could dispatch some necessary business for his flock in Basra he intended to leave for Kharg island, where he would make his residence until affairs in Persia grew quieter, "if the head of the Dutch there will allow me to land and stay there". . . .'

On 11.2.1763 in fact he sailed for Kharg:¹ the sequel he told briefly in his letter of 5.7.1763:²

"In my last letter I informed the Sacr. Congregation of my departure for Kharg, where "I arrived eighteen days later, towards the end of last February: after having stopped there "three months and ten days, consecrated the Holy Oils and administered Confirmation "I was obliged to return to Basra because the Dutch governor there did not permit me to "stay there longer³ on the pretext that though, true, his Company did allow a missionary "Father to dwell there, they would not permit the fixed residence of a bishop. From the "enclosed letter written me by the director in question in reply to one of mine before my "departure your Eminence and the Sacr. Congregation will understand this affair better, "and be able to take those measures you may judge suitable to obtain from the gentlemen "of the Company in Holland more comprehensive orders. . . ."

Although in the section of this work dealing with the Residence of the Carmelites on Kharg island the manner of the establishment and the expulsion of the Dutch East India Company is incidentally treated at some length and reference should be made to it, so that the whole will not be reproduced in this chapter, it is well to explain from extemporary recitals how the Dutch Company came to get occupation of this small island, and the Carmelites to become interested in what was before 1750 and is today the home of a few hundred fishing-folk and peasants: in the account of the work of Bishop Cornelius, whom it mainly concerned, a digression regarding Kharg is therefore made at this point. *Cont. Basra Chron.*, in its own mordant comments on human failings and in an ungrammatical eighteenth-century Latin 'slang' which might well puzzle the Regius professor of any university to translate with precision, relates that,

"11.1.1753. . . . The Dutch 'president', Baron Knipphausen, went through a rather "tragic crisis. Born in Prussia of noble parentage, a follower of no religion, but clearly not "unacquainted with the vicissitudes of the world, having had an excellent intellectual "education and being outstanding in ability, he had landed here from Batavia, in 1750 "as we noted above: in the year after his arrival he won the kindly regard and esteem of "everybody; but, with fortune favouring him and becoming anon too much puffed up with "the breath of applause, he thought he could turn everything upside down to get his own "way, and ruin and trample underfoot others: and so he began to be looked upon with "eyes of hate and malice by exceedingly many persons, among the Europeans in particular "by Mr. Ellis at that time the English Resident here, and among the Muhammadans by "a certain Hasan Agha, whom shortly before, by means of very fine gifts tendered by him "to Sulaiman Pasha, he had had dismissed from the governorship of this town, as also by "several other notables among the Turks. . . . The violent and unanimous complaints "of all these persons having been reported to the Court at Baghdad at length moved "Sulaiman Pasha to indignation, and 'Ali Agha, the Mutasallim here at the time, was "instructed that, should the English Resident agree, he should knock on the head Baron "Knipphausen's too great freedom of speech and ways of living. When he received this

¹ See *Cont. Basra Chron.*

² *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 219.

³ Baron von Knipphausen had been transferred to Batavia and a Mynheer Buschman, who replaced him and who had previously been second-in-command, turned unfriendly after his promotion. According to *Cont. Basra Chron.*, under date 11.2.1763, the Bishop had made a mistake in asking for letters of recommendation to be obtained from the governors of the Dutch Company in Amsterdam, so that his position on Kharg might thereby be strengthened. On the contrary, from Amsterdam complaints were made to Batavia, headquarters of the Company, that the Catholics were having too much liberality and rope in Kharg. This reply doubtless influenced the Dutch commandant in his refusal to allow permanent residence of the Bishop, who also was "immoderate in the display of his purple while on the island".

"order, on 11.1.1753 the Mutasallim sent for the Dutch Resident, who, suspecting nothing "untoward, with the usual retinue of his household and staff went to call on him; but, no "sooner had he entered than the Mutasallim's officials laid hands on him and thrust him "down into a dungeon along with his interpreter, a Christian from our church, and his "Hindu *sarraḥ*" (i.e. cashier). "When that was done, the Mutasallim called a meeting "of the leading Europeans and also the notables of the town, and communicated to them "in their presence the arrest of the Dutch Resident at the bidding of Sulaiman Pasha, "indicating also that he considered the case of the arrested man was in a bad way.

"The Mutasallim was in a mind to send him back to Batavia with a ship which was about "to depart there, and also to bilk him first as much as possible so as to make him all the less "encumbered for the journey. Accordingly he protested that he could nohow free him "from death, and went to the length of sending an executioner into the prison to influence "and intimidate him (Baron Knipphausen) with the livelier fears. Meanwhile those, on "whom it should have been incumbent and to whom for furthering the general interests of "the Europeans it should have been fair and a fine thing to stand up for him" (Baron Knipphausen), "kept rejoicing at his bonds, even though they might seem, so far as mere "show went, to be treating busily with the Mutasallim for his deliverance. Of their number "were Mr. Ellis, the English Resident . . . and also (what stinks more foully in the nostrils) "the second-in-charge of the Dutch Company himself, Mynheer Vanderoust, who augured "the zenith of his own fortunes from the eclipse of his Chief's to arise from human assistance, "as he thought. Kept in prison (Baron Knipphausen), as he had no right to expect any "stroke of luck, deemed it more prudent to accommodate himself to the straits in which he "was, and gave instructions to Mynheer Vanderoust to satisfy the accursed hunger of the "Mutasallim for gold, and pay out to him from the Company's money 75,000 isolatas. "When that money was inside the Muhammadan alms-box, the Mutasallim began to desist "from his talk of capital punishment, and to the feigned prayers and promises of the "Europeans he gave up Baron Knipphausen, but only on the stipulation that he (Baron "Knipphausen) should be taken by a direct route from the prison on board ship: and this "also was done. When the deportee had got on board, the English Resident and the second- "in-charge of the Dutch Company, promoted and appointed by the Mutasallim to be the " 'president' of the Dutch Company with a robe of honour (*kurk* as they call it), began "to busy themselves along with the Muhammadans in concocting letters to be sent to "Batavia in praise of themselves and warning and impressing" (i.e. on the Council of the Company at Batavia) "the mode of living of the deportee.

"Yet, with his spirit not at all broken, Baron Knipphausen turned over in his undaunted "mind how to lead the men hostile to himself and still laying their snares for him into the "pit they had digged for him. . . . And in fact two birds were taken in one and the same "trap. For, knowing well what a strong enticement money was to the Turks, he secretly "sent go-betweens to hint friendly-wise to the Mutasallim that here was a chance lying to "his hand to be able with impunity to extract money from the Hindu *sarraḥ*" (cashier) "of the Company, who was considerably rich, and also from Mynheer Vanderoust on the "pretext of the robe of honour given for the headship" (of the Company) "which he had "attained. The Mutasallim readily gave ear to those who made the suggestion, nothing "suspecting that a snake lurked in the grass. So straightway he extorted from the cashier "25,000 isolatas and from Mynheer Vanderoust 30,000. Taken aback at this latest " 'hurricane', Mynheer Vanderoust, who previously had been distant and far from well "disposed towards Baron Knipphausen, was compelled unwillingly to have recourse for "help to him, in order to find means of meeting the charge and impost on himself.

"The latter" (i.e. Baron Knipphausen) "received the 'refugee' politely and listened and, "manifesting no small wonder over the Mutasallim's method of acting, in reply to the "lamentations of the wailing Mynheer Vanderoust dwelt for a while . . . on the Muta- "sallim having proceeded very irregularly, when he was snatching money from him" (i.e. Mynheer Vanderoust) "a man guileless of all blemish of human frailty and so recently

"promoted to be chief representative" (of the Company); "but with no little imperturbability" he kept on saying: 'How can I avail to assist you, disgraced by so many charges, riddled "and put out of the way by so much" ' (false) "evidence, as I am, deported, a prisoner, "that you ask my advice? It seems to me that one thing remains—either (being not to "blame, it is permissible) you pay in cash, or (which God forbid) you pay corporally "inside the prison, unless you have recourse to the English Resident: *he* has influence, "and will in no wise allow you to be saddled" ' (with this impost).

"As he was not in a position to rebut them, Mynheer Vanderoust bore with the requisite "equanimity the strictures of his chief, whom he had betrayed, and again breaking out into "entreaties did not weary of asking him the more earnestly to be so kind and courteous as "to come to his rescue in his trouble with advice and support. Herod and Pilate having "thus been made friends on that day, he (Mynheer Vanderoust) began the task by burning "the letters which he had previously composed for Batavia against Baron Knipphausen at "the malicious instigation of the Turks and of the English Resident, his" (Baron K's) "enemies.

"Hence the aggressiveness of the Mutasallim having resulted in a common accord "between the principal and second-in-charge of the Dutch Company, letters putting forth "their case were hammered and forged by one and the same pen to Batavia: and it was not "in the least difficult for Baron Knipphausen to demonstrate in Batavia, by the money got "by trickery on the part of the Mutasallim out of both the Hindu cashier of the Company "and Mynheer Vanderoust himself, that the Mutasallim had plunged into these hostile "actions in no wise on the very different ground of his own mode of living, but from a "grasping greed for money. On that day when the Dutch ship was ready to sail out of port "Baron Knipphausen sent for the second-in-charge, the clerks, the doctor, the cashier, and "all the employees of the Company there were, to go to him, with the intention of giving "Basra its discharge, and decamping without saying good-bye; but scarcely had the ship "hoisted sail than, by a stroke of ill luck, it stuck in the mud, and was unable to proceed "any farther. This being observed, Ibrahim" (? *sic*, for Hiahim, presumably the Captain Pasha of the Imperial galleys) "Pasha then staying at Minawi gave warning to the Muta- "sallim, and by common accord they obliged all the Dutch to leave the ship . . . Baron "Knipphausen being without any delay sent off on a small boat out of the river" (i.e. down over the bar of the estuary of the Shatt-ul-'Arab).

"He (Baron Knipphausen) reached Bandar Rig not far distant, where he was very kindly "received by the Arab-Persian governor of that village named Mir Nasir, and awaited his "ship on which to proceed to Batavia. He did not neglect to procure evidence (which he "had in advance had prepared at Basra) contrary to the assertions of the Muslims and "favourable to himself . . . and, having related the insults done to himself and to the" (Dutch) "nation, sent letters thence to the Dutch Envoy in Constantinople, so that the "latter . . . might make a claim to the Porte and demand satisfaction for the breach of "treaty; and he sought for the cession of the island of Kharg without payment from the "said Mir Nasir," (saying) "that the Dutch Company would grant him asylum there, and "he might flee there when troubled by the intestine strife in Persia.

" . . . Then he repaired to Bushire, where at that time the Dutch Company had a "trading establishment, and thence wrote to Mynheer Vanderoust to leave Basra at once "and come to take charge of that house" (i.e. Bushire), "and to the remaining members "of the staff of the Company to say farewell to Basra at the first opportunity and also "betake themselves thither (to Bushire): and so from Bushire he sailed to Batavia.

"Mynheer Vanderoust, therefore, boldly presenting himself before the Mutasallim, asked "permission to depart, asserting that he had been promoted to the management of the "establishment at Bushire of the Company, whose instructions, coming from the highest "authority, he was quite unable to resist without being put down as disobedient, and that "he was leaving in his stead here Mynheer Chus [*? sic*] the senior clerk together with the "others: and, having successfully overcome some objections of the Mutasallim, he removed

"to Bushire. About that time the Dutch clerk was caught at night in a garden near the town with a Turkish woman and taken before the governor; and, as in those critical days Europeans were being held in the greatest contempt, he got out of it with difficulty for the sum of 5,000 isolatas, and then went off to Bushire: the rest of the staff of the Dutch Company after the lapse of some months secretly and unexpectedly escaped from Basra.

"Having reached Batavia Baron Knipphausen did not find it difficult with the letters above mentioned to bring over to his views the director-general and supreme council: wherefore, having obtained three ships, towards the end of November" (i.e. 1753) "he got back to Bandar Rig and cast anchor, waiting outside the creek for a rather valuable Turkish vessel, which had been about to leave for Surat. The arrival of the Dutch ships being known, the traders were no little disturbed as to whether it was advisable to postpone the sailing of the vessel in question. However it may be, the vessel, yielding to its fate, sailed for this port" (i.e. Basra) "and would not have escaped falling into the hands of the Dutch, had it not been for their innate sluggishness, or that they were too confident and for their delaying attack on the Turkish vessel till the following day; because the Turkish vessel, getting wind of the intention . . . slipped away at night, unharmed, from Bandar Rig, where the Dutch ships were then lying.

"At that juncture there arrived in reply from Constantinople letters in which Sulaiman Pasha" (i.e. of Baghdad) "was strictly admonished that the sums of money taken from the Dutch were to be restored to them, and their expenses and losses made good, and that the wrath of the Grand Signor of the Turks would never be quenched until the most undeservingly attacked Dutch Resident wrote anew to the Sublime Porte that he had been in every way satisfied. Sulaiman Pasha read the above mandate, but to put it into execution was of small interest to him, seeing that, having some time previously shaken off the yoke . . ., relying on his own name and sword he was then by way of making himself master of Baghdad.

"Meanwhile, in the interval of waiting for the harvest season, Baron Knipphausen had retired to the island of Kharg where, so as not to lose time, he put forth his energy and was applying himself to the building of a fort and houses, when in the month of July" (? 1754) "two Turkish ships from Surat appeared, on their way to Basra. They had hardly reached the island, when the master of the vessel named Salih Chalabi went to call on the governor, showing him friendly letters of recommendation obtained from the President of the Dutch Company at Surat. The said Salih Chalabi was received, to be sure, kindly enough; but, when the time came that he asked permission to depart and continue on his voyage, Baron Knipphausen pointed out to him that it squared but little with his friendship so lately professed that they should be separated by so untimely a departure: that he" (Baron Knipphausen) "had for some time past several matters to settle with Basra, the happy issue and solution of which were augured by the arrival of those vessels there. Having so expressed himself, lest the ships should be worn out by uselessly riding at their anchors, in the twinkling of an eye the Dutch ships saw to it that the rigging and masts of the Turkish vessels were lowered and the rudders removed. When he had effected nothing by threats, prayers, solemn promises, leaving his vessels there, Chalabi was compelled to come here" (i.e. Basra) "on a trankey and warn the Turks that, if they wished to buy back their merchandise, they should decide to give satisfaction to the Dutch with all earnestness and speed.

"Only he who is not ignorant of the inborn Turkish pride, by which they esteem everything else of no account and put an end to other people, is able to understand how the whole of this town was thrown into confusion, excited to wrath, and struck with shame. But it was no longer any time for threats or boasting. The assembly of the elders met and concluded that they had been delivered over to drinking the bitter chalice, and they wrote to Sulaiman Pasha that there would be no solution of the inevitable dilemma without the expenditure of money. Perceiving that without difficulty the Pasha, with a show of indignation . . . replied to the Mutasallim that he (the Pasha) had indeed

"bidden him (the Mutasallim) dim the eyes of the shameless Dutch Resident, but by no means had he bidden him extract the man's eyes: wherefore he (the Mutasallim) should make amends, and return as soon as possible the money to him" (Baron Knipphausen) "So, gold having been extracted from the merchants and magnates of Basra, within a few days where the river joins the sea" (i.e. the 'bar' of the Shatt-ul-'Arab) "they brought it to the Dutch ship: and, when it had been weighed and measured, the Dutch ship sailed off victoriously to the island of Kharg. . . . The Pasha left no stone unturned to get the Dutch to transfer themselves to Basra, proposing so many opportunities, so many favours: and, when it proved of no avail, became so obsequious as to send an Aga from his Court at Baghdad with a robe of honour to Kharg.

"Baron Knipphausen received him benevolently, and replied that it was by instructions of the Supreme Council at Batavia that the Dutch flag had been unfurled there at Kharg, and he was unable to transfer it to Basra without receiving authority from Batavia to do so. After profuse protestations of friendship the envoy was given leave to depart, while the Dutch ship sailed away to Batavia, carrying there the joyous news of the recovery of the money, of honour rehabilitated, of the erection of the new House of the Company and of the fort on Kharg island; while at Basra, by the mercy of God Who had turned loss into gain, the prestige of the name of European was increased. . . ."

As soon after the Dutch occupation as 9.3.1754 Fr. Angel Felix went from Basra to Kharg and "spent Easter with the Christians there": while early in 1755 the Carmelite Vicar Provincial (Fr. Cornelius of S. Joseph himself) went to Kharg, whither on his instructions Fr. Urban transferred his post from Bandar 'Abbas: Fr. Cornelius explained in a letter written from Aleppo, 20.12.1755,¹ to the Cardinal Prefect:

" . . . When he saw that it was difficult for him to penetrate into the interior of Persia . . . Bishop Sebastian . . . had determined to go and reside on Kharg, an island . . . of which the Dutch Company had taken possession two years ago and there constructed a fort, which was to defend the new town, which is now² being built there. With that object I betook myself there, and obtained by the courtesy of the commandant, Baron Knipphausen, not only permission to build there a Residence for two of our Religious, with a church open to the public, . . . but he also granted me permission to add to it quarters for the Bishop of Isfahan, realizing that residence of that prelate on the island would attract many Christians from Persia to establish themselves there, to the advantage of the Company. In pursuance of that permission Monsignor (Sebastian) commenced to send there from Basra material³ to make a beginning with the rooms allowed him, and which were to have been finished in September, leaving for the coming year the construction of the church and convent. . . . Owing to his death and my departure the new foundation remains suspended. . . ."

The Carmelite Vicar Provincial urged it as necessary, in his opinion, because a missionary was required there to hear confessions of the German Catholic soldiers, who furnished the garrison (not Dutchmen, apparently), to instruct a number of slaves desiring baptism, and because numbers of Armenians from Julfa, both Catholics and schismatics, had gone to live there: and the protection of the Company, the privilege of travelling in their ships would be valuable.

Under the year 1756 Fr. Angel Felix, who resided in Kharg at intervals for several years, recorded in *Cont. Basra Chron.*:

¹ *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 204.

² This is the explanation why, contrary to what is seen in other townships on the Persian littoral, the streets in the village of Kharg, even today, are straight and wide and houses separated from each other in walled enclosures—the ground plan survives from that drawn by the Dutch in 1754.

³ Compare Fr. Hyacinth's letter, 23.6.1755 (O.C.D. 242 b): ". . . Baron Knipphausen has written to Mgr Sebastian, 'inviting him to proceed to Kharg. . . . Mgr Sebastian has accepted his courtesy, and sent 200 pieces of timber. . . .'"

"So in the year 1757 our tolerably large House there was finished, the building of which "swallowed more than 2,000 rupees¹ (40 Tumans of which Fr. Cornelius of S. Joseph "repaid, and the rest Divine providence supplied) in ironwork, in beams and such-like, "though reckoned at minimum prices which, it will be only fair for all time to recognize, "was due to the liberality of the praiseworthy Baron Kniphausen: and in order to forestall "and eliminate utterly any future disputes he deigned to secure and stabilize that house of "ours by a deed in favour of the Company to the following effect:

" 'In the name of the honourable Company of the East Indies we permit the reverend
 " 'Fr. Angel Felix of the Holy Spirit, Discalced Carmelite, to construct on this island a
 " 'house, garden and church, and to perform the Divine Office according to the Roman
 " 'Catholic rite for the Christian inhabitants or foreigners, on condition, however, that
 " 'a Religious of the Discalced Carmelites and of no other Order reside here.
 " 'Given in the island of Kharg at Moselstein Fort, 1st May 1757, Kniphausen.' "

In 1760 the Dutch at Kharg made Fr. Clement their attorney and agent in Basra for their mails: the English consul and French vice-agent both objected to the appointment, complained to the Turkish governor and had Fr. Clement arrested by Turkish soldiers and deported to Baghdad: so that the Bishop had to protest, and this Religious was then appointed to Kharg.² Elsewhere, in the first portion of this chapter, the sudden and dramatic ending to that Dutch occupation of the island (which might well in time in their hands have proved a second Hurmuz, had years consolidated their hold) has been described: with the expulsion of the Dutch went all the Armenian Catholics: the Carmelite hospice and church were looted; their mission came to an equally sudden end.

Repelled from Kharg the Bishop of Isfahan, as he explained in his letter of 2.5.1765 from Bushire to the Cardinal Prefect:³

"obliged to return to Basra, I dwelt there about one year awaiting some favourable opening
 "for re-entering Persia. It was offered me by the establishment which the English Company
 "has set up in this port of Bushire,⁴ and eagerly I came here by the first opportunity, so
 "that of the three years permitted me to reside in Basra I stayed there only one year and
 "some months. . . ."

Mgr Cornelius had received news in private letters from Rome that the Cardinal Prefect and Secretary of the Sacra. Congregation had

'taken it ill that he had stayed for some time at Basra. He therefore found it necessary
 'to point out that, whereas the decree of the Sacra. Congregation of 17.3.1760, approved
 'by the Holy Father, permitted his residence for three consecutive years and the use of
 'pontificals in Basra, in respect of which the Congregation had itself written to the diocesan
 'Bishop of Baghdad, he' (Bishop Cornelius) 'had abstained from profiting by those
 'faculties, despite requests from Julfa Armenians, in order to avoid hurting the susceptibilities
 'of the diocesan prelate. . . .'

After giving in detail the numbers of Catholics in all provinces of Persia, and the political situation (reproduced in another portion of this chapter) the Bishop of Isfahan thought that

'their Eminences would be able to judge whether it would be feasible for him to reside
 'with profit in Isfahan. . . . He did not claim to exempt himself altogether from going

¹ Much at variance with Fr. Hyacinth's letter of 23 8.1757 (*S.R.*, vol. 773). To finish this "new house . . . the expenditure incurred by me amounts to 600 scudi, and more, all of it alms given voluntarily by our Armenian Christians, excellent Catholics, and all flock of the Bishop of Isfahan. . . ."

² Bp. Emmanuel, 19.6.1760, *S.N.R.*, I, p. 281.

³ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 308.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 219. The Bishop in 1763 anticipated that "many families of Armenian Persians now in Basra or scattered in the neighbourhood would cross over to Bushire in order to dwell under the protection of the English flag, at this time the most respected in the Indies and adjoining countries. . . ."

‘to Julfa, at least to pay a visit, but more favourable circumstances were to be awaited. ‘He trusted it would be soon, as then he would be in a climate infinitely healthier, and ‘similar to that of Milan, his home, with all the conveniences of life—exquisite wines, iced ‘water, fruits and most excellent vegetables, whereas in Bushire, except for fish, there was ‘a lack of all comforts: in summer one was obliged to suffer the heat of hell, with brackish ‘water as the only refreshment. And with all respect he trusted that their Eminences did ‘not imagine that in Persia the bishop had a house, kept an episcopal table, had a cathedral ‘chapter, and the like things possessed by the smallest diocesan in Europe. The bishop ‘of Isfahan had a diocese a hundred times larger than that of Rome, with neither house ‘nor roof nor church of his own: at one time he is obliged to lodge with the missionaries: ‘at another with some Catholic layman, or in a room in the open country. His flock is ‘what forms his church, often an ambulating church: at that time in its largest numbers ‘it was to be found in Bushire and Kharg. So he concluded by hoping that their Eminences ‘would not take it ill that he had been stopping in those two places. . . .’

It was at Bushire in February 1765 that the noted German traveller and writer, Karsten Niebühr, met Bishop Cornelius and his companion, Fr. Antony Marian. It was only on the decline of Bandar ‘Abbas (Gāmbnun) at the end of Nadir Shah’s rule that this peninsula had come into prominence as a caravan terminus for the interior: and this was due presumably, in the first instance, to the fixing by Karim Khan Zand of his chief residence at Shiraz and campaigning between Shiraz and the coast at Bushire on the one hand as well as the development of trade by refugee Armenians, on the other by the transfer of both Dutch and English Companies to Bushire, when they abandoned Gāmbnun—both events in the decade 1753–63. It became the port for transshipment up and down the Gulf. In former times a traveller from Isfahan for Basra after passing Shiraz had made for Bandar Rig. An attempt at a settlement had been made by Fr. Urban in 1744, a house bought. After the brief stay in Bushire of Bishop Sebastian and his brother in 1753 there were Religious residing in the small port for periods of some months in 1757–8.¹ From 9.11.1764, when Bishop Cornelius left Basra for Bushire, there were Carmelites in residence till February 1769 when, as narrated in the first section of the chapter, the English Factory was transferred to Basra owing to their discord with Karim Khan, and Fr. Antony Marian thought it well to abandon that mission² also: and, though the date is not on record, the Bishop of Isfahan too withdrew once more to Basra. While it lasted it was not unfruitful as a field, for Bishop Cornelius could write, 2.5.1765:³

“Here in Bushire, where I am, in less than one year 21 persons have been baptized, the ‘majority of them adults, i.e. one Persian Gabr (Zoroastrian) the rest pagan (Hindus) ‘who had come from India, as well as some apostates reconciled and three Armenian ‘heretics converted. . . .”

Afterwards Bushire was occasionally visited by the Carmelites, however, for *Cont. Basra Chron.* records Fr. Ferdinand of S. Charles and Fr. Aloysius Mary going there from Basra, 28.7.1776, and the latter returning from Bushire in September 1777 and again leaving for Persia in April 1778: and a building or house may have been retained because, 8.7.1780, the Cardinal Prefect of the Sac. Congregation wrote from Rome⁴ referring to the sadness caused him by

“the news that our mission at Bushire is in great danger because of that town having ‘fallen into the hands of some rebel Persian . . .”

and applauding Fr. Aloysius Mary’s readiness to go to Bushire and “join the other missionaries”.

¹ Vide Fr. Hyacinth, 8.3.1758, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 380.

² *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 308.

³ Vide *Cont. Basra Chron.*

⁴ *Lettere dalla S. Cong.*, 1780, vol. 236, p. 493.

To return to Bishop Cornelius of S. Joseph. Finding himself once more cut off from Persia (though it was a few years before the English Residency returned to Bushire), he offered his resignation and in the session of the Sacr. Congregation, 22.5.1769, it was considered and the rescript issued:

“Let a letter be written to the Bishops of Baghdad and Isfahan for their opinions” (about the future of the diocese). “Our view is for it to be committed to the charge of the Bishop of Baghdad, but that for the time being the Bishop of Isfahan should carry on with his ‘pastoral duties. . . .’”

A minute made of proceedings at the session of 2.4.1770 makes clear the date and part of the motive for the resignation:

“as he remained in Basra idle in the midst of his former flock, without being able to exercise ‘any jurisdiction over them in view of the jealousy of the Bishop of Baghdad, the diocesan, ‘on 22.8.1769 he requested permission to resign voluntarily his bishopric; but the Sacr. ‘Congregation did not accept it and wrote an unofficial letter to the Bishop of Baghdad” (telling the latter) “to use great forbearance towards the Bishop of Isfahan as far as regarded ‘the superintendence of his former flock, at least until the Congregation could otherwise ‘dispose of the prelate. . . .”

But the following year,¹ at the session of 2.4.1770, when it was read to the Congregation that

“His Holiness has handed over to your Eminences a letter from Mgr Cornelius of S. Joseph, Bishop of Isfahan, in which that prelate represents that as a plain missionary he ‘had served for 22 years in the Persian mission, and then being made bishop . . . he had ‘never been able to get through to his place of residence and had been constrained for ‘the space of 10 years to go first here, then there, to different places on the Persian Gulf ‘. . . as he is now of advanced age” (he was 60) “and worn out by sickness and fatigue ‘suffered . . . he needs . . . to return to his province and hopes to obtain that favour ‘when it is reflected that, so long as present circumstances continue, residence of a Bishop ‘in Persia is, in fact, useless: and that the only need there can be of one is to provide with ‘the Holy Oils the only two churches remaining at Julfa and Rasht, and Mgr the Latin ‘Bishop of Baghdad could easily see to this, as ‘coadjutor’ of the Bishop of Isfahan resident ‘on the borders of Persia. . . .”,

orders were passed:

“they” (the Cardinals in the Congregation) “allowed the application, and directed that ‘a letter be written to the Bishop of Baghdad to look after the diocese of Isfahan. . . .”

Actually Mgr Cornelius had not quitted Basra by 20.5.1770, when a letter from him was addressed to the Sacr. Congregation,² which illustrates the long intervals between departures of caravans across the desert to Aleppo in those times:

“By a letter of 12.1.1770 . . . I also notified the Sacr. Congregation that I was about ‘to accept the courteous offer made me by the French consul here to travel in his company ‘at his expense to Aleppo. But . . . the extraordinary delay in the caravan, which was ‘due to depart last February and now will only get off on the road in the coming June, ‘has caused the consul to put off his projected journey to a more temperate season, so as ‘not to expose himself and me to crossing the desert at the time of the most broiling summer ‘heat, to the risk of our lives. So I shall have, I hope, every convenience for receiving,

¹ *Acta* for 1770, p. 70, para. 10.

² *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 580.

"prior to my departure from Basra, the necessary rescripts from the Sacr. Cong. . . . as
"also the reply of His Holiness to the petition I made to him to be allowed to retire as a
"simple Religious to some convent of the Order, and there quietly end the *rest of my days* . . ."

and presumably it was the spring of 1771¹ before he quitted the region of the Persian Gulf, where he had laboured so long, seeing that

"before my departure from Basra I had received the letter written me by the Sacr. Congregation under date 11.8.1770 . . .",

and he wrote from Baghdad, 30.6.1771,² to the Cardinal Prefect:

"In consequence of the permission graciously given me to retire to a convent of my
"Order I have come to Baghdad, where through the lack of an early caravan³ I see that,
"contrary to my wish, I am compelled to stay until after the broiling heat of summer has
"passed."

While in Baghdad he was to take part in a ceremony which made a small piece of church history, viz. the reunion of the Nestorian patriarch Elias to the Holy See.⁴

". . . The bishop deputed by the patriarch Elias to make his profession of Faith in the
"formula of Urban VIII . . . which he and his suite made to me publicly in our church
"and in the presence of Mgr Cornelius and of the missionaries, 22.11.1771 . . .";

and when

("despite plague already epidemic round Baghdad, the activities of 'Ali Baig in Syria,
"and disorders committed by troops on march, all reasons that rendered the rare caravans
"far from safe,")⁵

he at last departed from Baghdad for Aleppo, 17.12.1771, he was the bearer to Rome of the documents of reunion:⁶ and from Aleppo Mgr Cornelius wrote on the subject to the Cardinal Prefect, 16.2.1772.⁷ By 25.4.1772 he had reached Naples,⁸ whence he wrote warning the Sacr. Congregation that

"all letters coming by sea from countries suspected of contagion" (i.e. from plague) "pass
"through the lazzereto and quarantine posts, and are unsealed and fumigated as a pre-
"caution . . ."—

evidence that at Naples 160 years ago they were thorough in their quarantine precautions,

¹ *Vide* a letter from Basra of 18.2.1771, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 604. "our illustr. reverend Mgr leaves here with the greatest displeasure. . . ." ² and ⁵ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 631.

³ What a caravan journey meant in those years may be read from Mgr Charles of S. Conrad's letter, 13.6.1774 (*S.R.*, *nei Congressi*, 34):

" . . . after a few days a caravan will leave" (Basra) "for Aleppo, to the number of 200 loaded camels only but with
"50 soldiers as a guard for fear of the various Arab tribes, so the cost of forwarding will be nearly 200 piastres a load.
"I do not grumble at paying 55 for a riding camel, and 70 for the camel with the trunks when coming here."

⁴ Bishop Emmanuel, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 669, 2.12.1771.

⁶ Bishop Emmanuel, 18.1.1772, *S.N.R.*, VIII, p. 18.

⁷ Bishop Cornelius, *S.N.R.*, VIII, p. 24.

⁸ *S.N.R.*, VIII, p. 26.

although the authorities were not to know that this infection is spread only by the living rat-flea.¹ 'The rest of the days' of this worthy Bishop proved to be long, for he died in the Carmelite convent at Milan in 1797, aged 87 years; but they were not 'quiet' at the end:

"Mgr Cornelius of S. Joseph, the last Bishop of Isfahan, had a pension of 200 scudi "from the Sacr. Congregation, out of which 50 scudi were paid to the Administrator (of "the diocese). He also left a legacy for the Persian mission, which could not be put into "effect, and died in Milan *during the Revolution*."²

The course of administration of the diocese after the retirement of the Bishop may be told briefly. In his letter of 1.12.1771³ Bishop Emmanuel of Baghdad acknowledged having

"received two letters from your Eminence, but the one was only to saddle me with, and "give me the care of the diocese of Isfahan in the absence of Mgr Cornelius. . . ."

A bare seven months later Mgr Emmanuel again wrote:⁴

"I have next to beseech your Eminence to release me from having charge and care of "the diocese of Isfahan, to which it is impossible for me to pay any attention. It appears "to me more fitting to put in charge of it (with the title of Vicar Apostolic) Fr. J. B. de "Bernardis, already a missionary at Julfa for 5 years. . . ."

From 20.11.1772 (*vide Acta* for 1778, fol. 309) Fr. John Baptist de Bernardis, O.P., was appointed by the Congregation administrator of the diocese: and he, 31.5.1774,⁵ arrived at Basra 'on business affairs': for a year he taught Armenian to Frs. Aloysius and Fulgentius, and then, 26.7.1775, "passed to the better life".⁶

That young Armenian of Julfa whom Bishop Cornelius had sent to Rome in 1758 to study at the Urban College, named John son of Aratun, and who arrived back as a priest in Julfa, 7.10.1769,⁷ by a decree of 8.6.1776 had been appointed administrator,⁸ with faculties renewed, 1.12.1773. It is therefore difficult to understand how in their letter of 12.9.1777⁹ the Sacr. Congregation addressed Fr. Louis Mary (Aloysius Maria) of the Heart of Jesus at Bushire in the following terms:

"The death of Fr. J. B. de Bernardis, O.P., formerly Vicar and administrator of the "diocese of Isfahan having been learnt, the Sacr. Congregation has deemed it its duty to "depute your Reverence in his place, as you will see from the decree and faculties which "are being sent you herewith: and this is with the object that that mission should not "remain without its head and director. After this present letter has reached you it will "be your business to take charge of the vacant administration. . . ."

Not only in 1777, but on 18.9.1779¹⁰ the Sacr. Congregation again addressed Fr. Louis Mary by the style of 'Administrator of the Bishopric of Isfahan' and, noting that in a report

¹ Over twenty years previously Fr. Ferdinand of Jesus Mary, writing from Naples, 3.2.1750 (*S.N.R.*, V, p. 391), grumbled at the quarantine service. From Civita Vecchia he had arrived at Naples on a Friday at 10 p.m. and the ship had not been given 'free pratique' till Saturday, 4 p.m.,

"the commissioners at that capital being so slow in their work. . . . It is certain that in other ports from that hour "of the day when we arrived up till it got dark free 'pratique' would have been given to more than 40 vessels in that "time, so our French captain said. . . ." He grumbled too that "between freight and duties in Naples and this town "(Messina) for the two boxes of books I spent 10 ducats." But, next month, "here in Malta, all went well, seeing that "there are no customs-houses, and any Religious or secular can carry his effects straight to his dwelling. . . ."

² A 'summary' written after 1806 in *S.N.R.*, I, p. 334.

³ *Idem*, VIII, p. 36, Mgr Emmanuel, 5.7.1772.

⁴ In his letter, 2.8.1764 (*S.N.R.*, VII, p. 266) Mgr Cornelius recommended him to the Card. Prefect, and enclosed his certificate of baptism.

⁵ *Vide* report of Cardinal Pamphili in session of 7.9.1778, *Acta* for 1778, p. 309.

⁶ *Lettere dalla Sacr. Cong.*, vol. 230, p. 520.

⁷ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 669.

⁸ and ⁶ *Cont. Basra Chron.*

¹⁰ *Idem*, vol. 234, pp. 600, 608.

of 20.2.1779 he had been detained at Basra by the illness of Fr. Fulgentius, supposed that by then he would have reached Julfa, whither they were sending the letter and a special grant of money. Further letters were dispatched on 8.7.1780 and 9.12.1780¹ to this Religious, encouraging him to proceed to Persia (as he was still in Basra). Yet, besides renewing the faculties of Fr. John son of Aratun in 1783, in the session of the Sacr. Congregation on 21.3.1791 the Secretary spoke of him as 'Administrator':

"The information which had already been received from the Vicar Apostolic at Constantinople, and from the pro-Vicar of Baghdad regarding the emigration of Catholics from Persia is now confirmed by Fr. John son of Aratun, *Administrator of the Bishopric of Isfahan*, himself in a letter dated Julfa, 30.11.1789. He says that the Persian mission, so flourishing at one time, *by the oppression of that tyrannical government* has been reduced to "the number of seven Catholics all told—all the rest have run away or died. . . . In that state of things he has often asked for advice and assistance from the Sacr. Congregation, but not having obtained it and being no longer able to exist there he says that he has determined to abandon those empty churches, and escape with the few Catholics who have remained to Baghdad.

"And afterwards a letter came from Fr. Fulgentius of S. Mary, the pro-Vicar in Baghdad, announcing to us that the Administrator together with his Catholics had safely reached Baghdad, where he thinks of settling. . . ."²

It appears, therefore, that it was the renewed struggle and further fighting between the Zands and Qajars, and the disorders and lawlessness that prevailed in the years between Karim Khan's death in 1779 and 1791, which finally ruined the Catholic Armenians of Julfa. The Armenian colony in Baghdad today is one outcome of that emigration.

* * * *

* * *

* *

Seeing that subsequently to the announcement of the death of Bishop Philip Mary of Isfahan in 1749 no letters of Carmelites written from Julfa have been traced and after the departure of Fr. Sebastian from Julfa in 1752 no priest of the Order resided there, and no letters from Fr. Urban at Bandar 'Abbas, which he left in 1755, little remains to be noted about the Convent and Residences established by the Order in Persian territory, apart from what has been already stated in this chapter and elsewhere in connection with the short-lived foundations on Kharg and at Bushire. But in the terminology of the Order the "Persian Mission" survived as a unit in their House at Basra, though, strictly speaking, it lay outside the limits of Persia: and with regard to that unit and nucleus a few points may here be noted—the student interested in details will find sixty pages with many interesting historical data, most of it in the ironic vein of Fr. Angel Felix, in *Cont. Basra Chron. (Chronica Bassorensis Missionis)*, the Latin manuscript annals printed and edited by Fr. Ambrose of S. Teresa, Archivist General of the Order, in 1934. During the twenty years, 1752–72, some fifteen to twenty Carmelite Religious arrived out from Europe and passed longer or shorter periods at the Residence in Basra: and it seems curious that at least half of them were dispatched for service 'in Persia' by the heads of the Order, whether the latter were oblivious to the almost complete exodus of Uniat Armenians and to the anarchy which deterred even Carmelite bishops from venturing into the interior, or else sanguine that soon the roads would become safe, order be restored, and then the Religious to staff the abandoned Houses would be ready to hand. In one case, at any rate, an appointment was made to Shiraz, where the Carmelite

¹ *Lettere dalla Sacr. Cong.*, vol. 236, pp. 493, 883.

² Quoted by Fr. L. Lemmens, O.F.M., in *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*, No. 10.

premises had been razed to the ground some years before, having for twenty years previous to that been a heap of ruins:

“By order of the Father General in the year 1756 I . . . proceeded to Basra in order “to pass on to the mission at Shiraz in Persia. . . . I found the thing completely impossible, “for some years to come at any rate, . . . because along with the House of the mission “the town of Shiraz also had been demolished and destroyed, altogether depopulated, and “empty of Christians. . . .”¹

On the other hand, when it was recommended by the bishops that Carmelites should be dispatched from Europe direct to Julfa and that Residence reopened to active work, no response was forthcoming—no one at any rate ventured to make the journey inland. Thus Bishop Emmanuel of Baghdad, near to the situation in central Persia, wrote to Rome, 15.7.1763:²

“. . . In view of the letter of Fr. Raymond Berselli, O.P.” (i.e. to the effect that the whole of Persia, and Isfahan in particular were quiet) “as also of the ease with which the “two new Dominicans reached Isfahan, and lastly of the return of a number of Persians “and Armenians, everything seems to indicate that there would be no objection to the “Jesuits and Discalced Carmelite Fathers sending Religious to re-establish their missions,”

and again, 5.1.1765:³

“I cannot understand why the Jesuit Fathers, the Capuchins and the Discalced Carmelites have made no attempt so far to re-establish their missions. Their Houses exist, “and they will have no difficulty in entering them, when they wish . . .”,

while, 30.6.1771,⁴ the Bishop of Isfahan expressed himself as follows:

“If your Eminence and the Sacr. Congregation judge it fitting to take away the Dominicans from that mission, in my opinion it is necessary to send some other missionary from “another Order in their stead, to take up the duty of looking after it and the” (Armenian) “priests. For such a proposition I would venture to suggest to your Eminence to choose “from the (Carmelite) Seminary at San Pancrazio (Rome) in consultation with the heads of “the Order one or two of the most capable and virtuous Discalced Carmelite Religious . . .”

Up till 1758 there was, it is true, a Carmelite lay brother still left: the Dominican Fr. Raymond Berselli had written⁵ that he was

“remaining alone in Julfa with one single Carmelite lay brother: Julfa is depopulated of “its own inhabitants, in place of whom dwellers of the countryside have taken refuge “there . . .”:

and the Dominican who followed him. Fr. de Bernardis, 20.10.1765,⁶ mentioned that:

“. . . the churches of the Jesuits and Carmelites in Julfa, and also that of the Annunciation “(belonging to the Messrs. Shariman) for the Armenian rite continue to be in my hands, “by God’s will: and, please God, there will be people to fill them. . . .”

In his full report handed to the Congregation in Rome in December 1772⁷ Bishop Cornelius was definite about the course to follow:

¹ Fr. Clement of the Annunciation, 20.3.1758 and 19.4.1758, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 382.

³ *Idem*, p. 292.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 631.

⁵ *Idem*, VI, p. 392.

⁶ *Idem*, VII, p. 319.

² *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 178.

⁷ *Idem*, VIII, p. 6.

“ . . . I do not doubt for a moment that the Sacr. Congregation, so zealous for the “propagation of the Faith, will try to . . . set up again those ancient, abandoned missions: “and more than any other Religious institution it should, in my opinion, interest itself in “that of the Discalced Carmelites: the missionary field of Persia had been specially assigned “to Religious of that Order, as is to be seen from the Bulls of the Sovereign Pontiffs, Paul V “and Urban VIII, so much so that for the maintenance of those missions and for the “seminarists sent out to them a sufficient capital sum was bequeathed by Baron Cimini, “lord of Cacurri, in the kingdom of Naples: what is being done with the yield of the legacy “must be known to the S. Congregation, which has the superintendence of it. . . .”

In specifying that, as a commencement in reopening, settlements might be made in four places in Persia, the Bishop of Isfahan put Julfa second:

“ . . . there is only one Dominican remaining and he, besides the house of his own Order, “has under his charge the very fine house and gardens of the Jesuits, and that of the “Discalced Carmelites. Now it seems to me not only opportune but also necessary, that “at least the last-named should re-establish themselves in order to guide, aid and protect “the two priests from Propaganda, who are in possession of the Catholic church of the “Annunciation, called the Shariman church, which was founded by Mgr Elias, Bishop of “Isfahan, by instituting the Vicar of the Discalced Carmelites as superintendent of that “parish church, it being almost adjoining the Residence of the Carmelite Fathers. When “the latter have returned to Julfa, it should be easy for them afterwards to recover as well “the very fine and ancient Convent which they used to have in the neighbouring royal “city of Isfahan, and which at present and for about 15 years past is and has been occupied “by a Persian who says that he is a creditor of our Fathers for 25 Tumans (which in Roman “money make 250 scudi)—although to tell the truth, as there has not remained a single “European resident or any Christian in Isfahan, it seems to me that it would be better, “when that House were recovered, to let it on rent, and from the proceeds have something “for the benefit of the mission in Julfa. . . .”

As to Shiraz, which he put third, while recognizing that there were few Catholics dwelling there, but numbers visiting it on business with the Court, he considered that:

“it would always be a good thing that someone should be permanently with the Prince “Regent—at least one of the missionaries—so as to be at hand . . . when necessary for “the welfare and preservation of the other missions against attempts which the heretical “Armenians, our enemies, are often wont to contrive. . . .”

While temporarily at Basra, on 13.6.1774, Mgr Charles of S. Conrad mentioned in a letter to Rome:¹

“ . . . Our church and Convent in Isfahan are in much better condition than those at “Julfa by reason of the care given them by the Persian with whom they were mortgaged “for 25 Tumans=125 Turkish sequins or 400 piastres, at 9 per cent. He gets the interest “on that money out of the garden adjoining the convent, so that according to what the “Armenian traders recently arrived” (in Basra) “tell me, if the Persian were to be given “the capital sum, he would hand back the church and convent. . . .”

¹ *Scritture Riferate nei Congressi*, No. 34. The same Carmelite prelate, writing 13.11.1774 (*S.R. nei Congressi*, 34, p. 264) made the note, interesting for modern comparisons, regarding his sailing from Basra to Bombay:

“ . . . for the passage alone, with accommodation in a small cabin, I had to pay 160 piastres, and for service and provisions, which I had to get afresh at Masqat, piastres 68, which altogether make the sum of 228 piastres from Basra “to Bombay. After 10 days’ stay in the port of Masqat we left on 2.10.1774 for Bombay, and after a very prosperous “voyage . . . at one hour after nightfall on 18.10.1774 I arrived in that island . . .” (i.e. 16 days’ sailing from Masqat to Bombay).

The report made by the Armenian Uniat priest John, son of Aratun, read by Cardinal Pamphilj in the session of 7.9.1778, stated that:

' . . . in Bandar Bushire, a port of the Gulf now much frequented . . . there are 6 or 7 'Catholics. There the Discalced Carmelites have a small house without a church, where 'at present Fr. Louis Mary from Sienna is. He' (the Administrator) 'says, however, that 'in view of the establishment of the (English) consul, Catholic merchants will probably be 'found travelling through there. . . .'

At Basra, when the missions in Mesopotamia had once more been reduced to a skeleton, and Fr. Sebastian of S. Joseph had died at Basra in 1799,

"the hospice was closed by the English consul. . . ."

It was that same 'English consul', officially styled then the 'Resident' for the East India Company at Baghdad, who from "master Jones", as here described, was to become Sir Harford Jones-Brydges, baronet, the noted earliest of British ministers plenipotentiary at the Court of the new Qajar dynasty in Tihiran, whose merits lay not only in able diplomacy: for when Fr. David of S. Theodore had also died, Fr. Fulgentius, Vicar Apostolic, reproachfully wrote to the Order in Rome:¹

"I cannot do any more, because I am old. Missionaries are needed to keep up our "missions. All the hospices" (i.e. in Mesopotamia) "shut, two old men—one in Aleppo, "and I here, where plague is expected any day: I intend to leave for Basra, but . . . Here "in Baghdad the church of the Chaldaeans has been totally destroyed by the Turkish "government, and there remains no other Catholic church but ours: and, as I am leaving "for Basra, necessarily the Hospice will be closed. . . . The *only helper I have* is the English "consul, master Jones, whom God preserve for the welfare of our Houses . . .",

one more instance of the wide tolerance of Protestant official for Catholic Religious, and of the cordial relations which right through two centuries these non-English Carmelites—perhaps more than any other Order in that region of the East—knew how to maintain with English political, commercial, shipping representatives, relations gratefully acknowledged.

* * * * * *

Next, apart from that of the Carmelites, the several endings of the establishments of other Orders may be noted, and statements regarding the general position of Catholics in Persia at various dates placed on record.

Before 1750 the Augustinians had remained without a single Religious—the first to come, the first to depart.

One Jesuit, Fr. Grimaud, on 22.4.1749 had arrived at Basra from Europe and 'left for his 'mission in Persia', which was at Rasht, 28.8.1749.² A letter, copied at Basra by Bishop Sebastian, 30.4.1754, mentioned that:

" . . . Fr. Desvignes, Superior of the Jesuit Fathers at Julfa, has been obliged after some "blows of the bastinado to hand over by *force majeure* the rest of the silverware of his "church . . .",

and on 1.5.1754 from Basra the Bishop alluded to there having remained behind in Julfa

¹ Fr. Fulgentius, Baghdad, 23.9.1799, O.C.D. 242 g.

² *Cont. Basra Chron.*

“a Jesuit unable to travel because of an infirmity of his legs. . . .”

From *Cont. Basra Chron.*, too, it is known that Frère Brazin, a French Jesuit lay brother, arrived at Basra, 23.6.1755,

“he had come by orders of his General to relieve the surviving Father in their mission at Julfa, Père Desvignes, and be a companion and comfort to him, as he was an invalid. “He waited 13 months in this House of ours at Basra and then, when at length the Father “in question quitted Julfa, he himself” (i.e. Frère Brazin) “set out on his own way by a “French ship. . . .”

But the invalid Fr. Desvignes,

“25.9.1757,¹ when he had already entered the river” (i.e. the Shatt-ul-'Arab estuary) “from the sea, departed this life . . . and his corpse was brought here” (Basra) “and “buried in the cloister” (i.e. of the Carmelite church).

The report by Cardinal Antonelli in the session of the Sacr. Congregation, 17.3.1760,² stated:

“The Jesuit Fathers had two missions—one in Julfa, the other at Rasht in the province “of Gilan on the Caspian Sea. They abandoned the first” (Julfa) “because of the continual “molestations they began to suffer in the risings, and the second” (Rasht), “so as not to “be obliged to leave one or two Religious in a place distant from other missions of the “Company.

“The last Jesuit Religious (at Rasht), who left by orders of his superiors and is now in “Syria . . ., suggested” (to Bishop Cornelius) “that Rasht be joined to Astrakhan, where “the Capuchins have a flourishing mission. . . .”

Then on 16.2.1764³

“the General of the Company of Jesus joins to his profound respect his humblest thanks “to Mgr the Secretary of Propaganda Fide for the views, which the latter has courteously “deigned to give him regarding the cessation of the persecution, and it being possible to “reopen the church at Julfa in Persia, which his” (Jesuit) “Religious used to have. In “this connection he (the General) has the honour to tell Monsignor that . . . already “several years ago it suited the Jesuit Religious to abandon the missions in Persia owing “to the impossibility of keeping them up, and that in 1760 he” (the General) “himself “ceded in perpetuity to the Capuchin Fathers the mission at Rasht near the Caspian Sea. “The dissolution of the Company in France, whence the missionaries for Persia were taken, “having supervened, and therefore means of providing for those missions having failed, “the General leaves unconditionally and voluntarily in the hands of the Sacr. Congregation “the church and mission at Julfa, renouncing any and every right he might have to them, “so that the Sacr. Congregation may provide the Christian community there with other “workers to keep it in existence, and extend it, as he desires, for the welfare of souls and “glory of God. . . .”

In the session of 30.7.1770⁴ of the Sacr. Congregation Cardinal Strappanij reported that:

“when . . . this” (the surrender by the General of the Jesuits) “was reported in the session “of 7.3.1760 it was decided to unite that mission to others which the Capuchin Fathers

¹ *Vide Cont. Basra Chron.* of that date. ² *Acta* for 1760, p. 149. ³ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 254. ⁴ *Acta* for 1770, p. 291.

"have in Muscovy and particularly in Kazan and Astrakhan, in view of the greater proximity, and this was put into effect by a decree approved and confirmed, 30.3.1760, by the late Clement XIII. . . . On 30.3.1766 the Prefect of the Capuchins wrote from Moscow that the mission at Rasht had continued to be abandoned . . . the Khan, or head of the province of Gilan, had himself many times asked for Capuchins to be sent there, promising to hand over to them the church and hospice left by the Jesuits. . . ."

As to the Capuchin Order, their convent in Isfahan city had been left abandoned from before 1745—as already noted from the detailed list made by the superior of the Jesuits in that year: so that it is somewhat surprising to find the remark in *Cont. Basra Chron.* under 4.5.1752:

"Fr. Hermengild, a Capuchin from 'Terra Santa', sent for Isfahan by his superiors, arrived at Basra; but, finding here that their mission there had been destroyed, on 4.8.1752 he proceeded to India. . . ."

In regard to their establishment in Tabriz, the historian of the Capuchin missions, Fr. Clemente da Terzorio, states¹ that in 1755 Fr. Innocent da Ascoli, who had a good knowledge of medicine, was sent to Tabriz: that he left Erzerum 6.5.1755 and no more was heard of his movements; while, concerning that at Tiflis in Georgia, a letter of 8.11.1756² used the words:

"when I heard that the Capuchin missionaries had been compelled to leave Tiflis I immediately tried to obtain letters of recommendation for them from the Imperial ambassador in Constantinople to the prince of Georgia, and on receipt I forwarded them to Fr. Serafin da Malta, prefect of that mission. . . ."

The Capuchin Order made an attempt to respond to suggestions for re-establishment of their mission, witness Fr. Clemente da Terzorio's history:

"Fr. Pierre François de Tourcoing and Fr. Marie de Cambrai got as far as Tabriz, but found they could not go farther."

Then, as to the former Jesuit mission at Rasht, thus made over to the Capuchins from 1760 both Fr. de Bernardis, O.P., from Julfa, 5.10.1764,³ urged that Capuchins be dispatched from Europe:

"I also take the liberty to suggest that . . . if it please their Eminences they should send more than one (missionary), and entrust to him the mission at Rasht in Gilan, now that the Capuchin Fathers in Muscovy cannot and will not be able to provide for it in view of the prohibition by Muscovy on missionaries in that country leaving for foreign countries . . .",

and Bishop Cornelius from Bushire, 2.5.1765, pressed the Sacr. Congregation to place Rasht under the Capuchins of Georgia (who must, it would seem, have returned to Georgia after their expulsion of 1756):

". . . I venture to advise your lordship and the Sacr. Congregation also to send some missionary to the mission at Rasht on the Caspian Sea. When I was in Rome . . . I was of opinion that it (the mission) might be assigned to the Capuchin Fathers of Georgia. The Sacr. Congregation thought it better to entrust it to those at Astrakhan and Kazan,

¹ Vol. III, Rome, 1920.

² Fr. Hyacinth of S. Teresa, Vicar General, Basra, *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 280.

³ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 275.

"being unaware that Muscovy does not permit missionaries in the empire to go outside its territory, as in fact happened: so that up till now that mission has not been provided" (with a priest). "Once more I recommend that it" (the mission at Rasht) "be given to the Capuchins in Georgia, who could easily get there from their residence in Ganjeh. . . . It is true that there are no Catholics settled there, but constantly Catholic traders are coming from Muscovy and other parts because of the trade in the famous silk of Gilan: and here I should warn you that this trade is no longer done in the town of Rasht itself, but on an island near the Caspian Sea, where for greater security ships put in, and there is a Muscovite consul and, I think, a hospice constructed by the Jesuits.

"This mission appears to me very necessary in the present circumstances in Persia, because with the loss of so many others it could be at least said that missionaries are to be found at the two opposite ends of the country, i.e. Bushire on the Persian Gulf and Rasht on the Caspian: from these two places, whenever God provides an opening, we could spread into the interior of the kingdom. . . ."

As late as the session of the Sac. Congregation, 30.7.1770,¹ on Cardinal Strappanij's report (he had mentioned that there were only 35 Armenians in Rasht) the rescript was issued: "Some missionary of the Capuchin Order is to be sent. . . ." Apparently the advice given by Bishop Cornelius was adopted, for the latter in his letter of 30.6.1771² spoke of

"orders having been dispatched to the Fr. Superior and Prefect to send to Rasht at once one or two missionaries of his Order . . .";

yet in his report of December 1772, written in Rome, the Bishop made it clear that "the Capuchin Father, who was expected, had not yet put in an appearance. . . ." As read by Cardinal Pamphilj in the session of 7.9.1778 a memorandum drawn up by the Administrator of the diocese, Fr. John son of Aratun, included the information:

"lately, however, the prince governor of Gilan, called — Khan, has . . . had . . . two Capuchins . . . with him as his doctors, to whom, the rumour is, he also assigned a good sum of money for their annual support. But he states that one of those two Religious, i.e. the priest, has died and there remains only the lay brother, who is sick. . . ."

In connection with Gilan after the departure of the Jesuits from Rasht, allusion may be made to one of those irresponsible, vagabond (*giovagi*) clerics, to be met in every age, in this case perhaps doubtfully a priest, and certainly a cause for scandal. He was

"called Emmanuel Caro, and he says that he is the son of a Spanish general, 'superintendent' at the Court . . . and brother of an archbishop, whose vicar general he was for some years too. For some years he wandered round Europe and finally . . . resolved to sacrifice himself to the service of the missions in Persia. In Rome he obtained—it is not known from whom—a faculty in writing for celebrating Mass in his own room, when passing through heretic or infidel lands. . . ."³

According to a letter of his own⁴ this Don Emmanuel Caro had arrived in Persia in 1766; but the first mention of him observed occurs in the letter of Fr. J. B. de Bernardis, the Vicar General of the diocese, dated Julfa, 20.12.1769,⁵ to the Cardinal Prefect:

¹ *Acta*, 1770, p. 291.

² Mgr Charles of S. Conrad, 13.6.1774, *S.R. nei Congressi*, No. 34.

³ See also Bp. Cornelius, 30.5.1770, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 580.

⁴ by a letter of 12.1.1770 . . . I sent enclosed a very diffuse epistle from a certain Don Emmanuel Caro, an 'American' secular priest, containing the translation in Italian of a letter which the Khan of that province had written to His Holiness in favour of the Catholics there, and particularly of this ecclesiastic. . . ."

⁵ *VOL. I—23*

² *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 631.

⁴ *S.N.R.*, V, p. 135.

"In Gilan the Latin church at Rasht has been taken over by Fr. Emmanuel Caro, an 'apostolic missionary, I do not know for certain of what Order. He writes to me that the 'Khan there has written in gilt letters to His Holiness asking for two or three Latin missionaries, and exhibiting the secular arm in his (Don Emmanuel's) favour in everything, 'but complaining at not receiving replies . . .',

although in the session of the Sacr. Congregation on 30.7.1770¹ Cardinal Strappanij had stated that the Superior of the Capuchins at Astrakhan had, 1.10.1768, notified the Sacr. Congregation:

"a certain priest named Emmanuel had intruded himself into the mission at Rasht: he 'had been a long time there, and passed himself off as having been an apostolic missionary 'in the city of Delhi, capital of the Mogul's dominions. . . ."

But the minutes of the session continued:

"Now from a letter from Mgr Cornelius of S. Joseph, Bishop of Isfahan, written from 'Basra, 10.1.1770,² what was unknown about the identity and status of the priest in question 'has been made clear. He had been born at Guadalajara in Mexico, had a passport from 'the Spanish consul in Villafranca, had been made priest in 1753, and was a parish priest 'for seven years: then he went to visit the Holy Places, stayed in Madrid for three years: 'he heard that a missionary was wanted in the Caucasus, and went via Holland and England 'to Petersburg, where he had been sent by the Empress to minister to the European 'colony. He then came to Gilan, where he had rebuilt the church and house at a cost 'of 256 scudi. . . ."

By instructions of the Sacr. Congregation, 11.8.1770, the Bishop of Isfahan sent provisionally to this Don Emmanuel Caro a commission as Vicar of Rasht, with the necessary faculties, 30.6.1771.³ At the end of July 1770 Don Emmanuel Caro was joined at Rasht by a Dominican, Fr. Norbert Secker.⁴ Two communications of 1772⁵ show that

'Don Emmanuel Caro, who in the guise of a physician had got into relations with the 'Khan, governor of the province of Gilan, and through his intermediary succeeded in 'recovering from the hands of the heretics that' (Jesuit) 'house and church . . . after 'remaining there three years, on hearing a report that a Capuchin Religious sent by the 'Sacr. Congregation to those parts was coming as a physician, sold the former hospice of 'the Jesuits to 'Turks', abandoned that mission to the small edification of the flock, and went 'to Shiraz, and there acts as a doctor for the Muslims, and has a bad name. . . .'

That was in 1771, and Bishop Emmanuel of Baghdad, Administrator of the diocese of Isfahan between the end of 1771 and July 1772,

"had ordered him" (Don Emmanuel Caro) "to quit Persia, but without any result. He 'lives by practising medicine, but scandalously according to what all merchants, who come 'from there, assert. Some indeed say that he is a Jew. . . ."⁶

Cardinal Pamphilj quoted in the session of the Sacr. Congregation on 7.9.1778⁷ the report of the Administrator of the diocese, Fr. John son of Aratun, dated April and September 1777 as to Shiraz, where

¹ *Acta* for 1770, p. 291.

² 30.6.1771, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 631.

³ Fr. John son of Isaac, Julfa, *S.N.R.*, VIII, p. 34, 10.5.1772, and Bp. Cornelius' report, Rome, December, 1772.

⁴ Mgr Charles of S. Conrad, 13.6.1774, *S.R. nei Congressi*, No. 34.

⁵ ? *sic*, 10.12.1770.

⁶ Fr. de Bernardis, 31.7.1770, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 584.

⁷ *Acta* for 1778, p. 309.

"at present there is nothing but a most unseemly and small chapel which the unworthy
"American' priest Emmanuel Caro (who has made himself a soldier slave of Karim Khan)
". . . has in his own dwelling. Fr. John son of Aratun, an ocular witness, wrote a short
"while ago to that priest a fatherly letter of admonition, but till now no effect has been
"seen. . . ."

It was the Dominicans who of the several Orders strove most at the end to fill the breach at Julfa, and keep the Latin missions alive: so that a portion of what little remains to be told of the general situation of Catholics in Persia in that century is bound up with them, although the Sacr. Congregation, as a last resort before the final withdrawal of the Catholics from Julfa in 1791, fell back on Armenian Uniat priests, former pupils of the Urban College in Rome. Already in 1752 Bishop Sebastian had welcomed news from Rome that a

"Dominican Father was to proceed to Julfa to be companion to the aged and gouty Fr. Raymond Berselli, O.P., a request several times made by the former Bishop Philip Mary to the Sacr. Congregation; but the Congregation had bidden the Religious in question wait at Smyrna till the disturbances in Persia ceased."

They did not cease, and the relief did not arrive. In 1754 in another letter the Bishop was fervently hoping that¹

"those few Christians who remain in Julfa along with four Religious and missionaries—
"one of my Order, another a Dominican, another a Jesuit, besides a good (Armenian)
"priest—may also be able to escape from a country, which at present has become so evil,
"and so dangerous both for the soul and for the body, a country I can truly say where
"iniquity is at present at its height, a country of hell. Poor Persia!"

In May 1758 the Congregation were again told through Fr. Lanza, the Dominican at Mausil,² that Fr. Raymond Berselli was

"repeating his request to be given the help of at least one Father who would learn the
"language from him and something about the country, serve the remnant of the Christians
"and, above all, preserve the House and mission, until God dispose otherwise the state of
"this desolated country. . . ."

It was 16.3.1760,³ however, before Fr. Leopold Soldini, O.P., wrote from Aleppo that he had been entrusted with 100 scudi by the Sacr. Congregation for Fr. Raymond and asked for clear instructions whether the Sacr. Congregation thought it well that he, Fr. Leopold, should proceed to Julfa to recover the little there might be in the hands of Fr. Raymond, and help in that mission. None the less Fr. Raymond had received that money by 8.11.1760 and was thanking his Eminence the Prefect for the

"extremely welcome grant of 100 scudi, which you had the kindness to make me: I received
"it at a most opportune juncture. A Georgian Christian, my creditor, intended to carry
"me off to Basra, but there was no money to pay him. In August of this year the sum in
"question was received through Fr. Leopold Soldini, and my other, ordinary allowances
"in Basra . . . the former through the English consul: my creditor took his hands off me,
"and went alone to Basra to take the money owed him: and so I have escaped four months'
"risky travelling and am able to remain at the mission in Julfa for our Catholics. If I
"had left I should have returned here, but it was better both for me and for the people
"of Julfa. . . . I long for the arrival of the new Bishop, the most illustrious Mgr Cornelius:
"he is needed both spiritually and to give temporal aid. . . ."

¹ *S.R.*, vol. 759, p. 248.

² *S.N.R.*, VI, p. 392.

³ *Idem*, p. 574.

Finally it was 1763 when at long last Fr. Raymond was able to welcome two younger brethren of his Order in Fr. John Baptist de Bernardis and Fr. Vincent Ferrer Ricci, who reached Baghdad from Aleppo, 16.4.1763:¹ later in the year the Bishop of Isfahan remarked that

'Fr. Raymond had written from Julfa that the number of Catholics remaining there did 'not exceed 25, and those were often decreasing by death, and marriage of the girls to 'schismatic husbands for want of finding Catholic youths, so that for so small a flock the 'three Dominican missionaries now there should be more than ample for the present. . . .'

But the Bishop had to his regret to announce² within a few months the death on 5.5.1764 of Fr. Raymond, "the last survivor of the former missionaries who had remained there", and that

'Fr. J. B. de Bernardis had remained there alone, because his companion, Fr. Vincent 'Ricci, had previously departed to come here" (Basra), "I know not with what motive: "I thought that on receiving news of Fr. Raymond's death he would have been bound to "turn back, in order to keep Fr. de Bernardis company. But it was not so: he decided to "continue his journey and, having taken ship from Bushire, had the misfortune to die at "sea in a boat near Kharg, where he was buried with all respect. . . ."

A letter of 5.10.1764³ from Fr. de Bernardis gave more precise indications: ". . . buried "near the Carmelite Fathers" (i.e. Fr. Urban); but he added hopefully,

"we have obtained from Karim Khan confirmation of the 'farmans' for the free practice "of the Catholic religion in the whole kingdom of Persia. . . ."

A third death that year made the position more difficult still, for the Bishop also informed the Sacr. Congregation

"of the death, which occurred at Basra, of one of the two Armenian Catholic priests, who "had left Julfa, so there only remains the elder one, an invalid and 60 years old. What "distresses these Armenians in seeing me depart" (to Bushire) "is not to have anyone to "whom to make their confessions, particularly the women, who can only do it in their "native tongue. . . ."

Both Bishops of Isfahan and Baghdad at once did their utmost to persuade the Dominican Fathers, already established at Mausil since 1751, to fill the gap at Julfa, but in vain, the former writing to the Secretary of the Sacr. Congregation, 2.5.1765:⁴

"I beg your Illustrious lordship to send to Julfa a companion for Fr. de Bernardis, O.P. ". . . not only for his consolation, but also because of all that might happen in case of "his death. I wrote to Fr. Dominic Lanza, the Superior of the Dominicans in Mausil, "begging him to dispatch one of those Religious of his, since he had more than sufficient. "But I have had no success—if the Sacr. Congregation send Religious to Persia, it would "be as well to advise them to take the route Baghdad–Hamadan, as being the easiest, "safest and least expensive, because of the caravans of Persian pilgrims coming from and "going to the tomb of 'Ali, situated in the territory under the jurisdiction of the Pasha of "Baghdad, whereas, were they to take the route Basra–Shiraz in addition to the expense . . .",

while Bishop Emmanuel of S. Albert in Baghdad, 5.1.1765,⁵ stated:

¹ Bishop Emmanuel, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 211.

² *Idem*, p. 275.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 347.

² *S.N.R.*, VII, pp. 266, 272.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 292.

"At once on learning of the deaths of the two Religious I informed the Dominican Fathers "at Mausil, three in number, so that they might immediately dispatch one of them. They "answered that they would await the instructions of their superiors on the subject. . . ."

Fr. Dominic Lanza, O.P.'s, own explanation,¹ given to the Sacr. Congregation, was that he was "unable to send a companion to Julfa for Fr. de Bernardis, because the two in Kurdistan "are already well occupied in separate places. . . ." So for several years that Dominican was to remain alone at Julfa.

Notwithstanding the paucity of numbers of priests and the difficult times, in matters of discipline the Holy See did not relax rules. Even before the coming of the younger Dominicans in 1764 the Bishop of Isfahan had had to notify the Sacr. Congregation that at Julfa they had adopted the old Armenian calendar in order to conform with the practice of people there.² In April the Sacr. Congregation issued the instruction:

"It is not permissible for the missionary Fathers and the Latin people residing at Julfa "to use the old calendar, but they are entirely obliged to observe the new calendar after "the form of the Bull of Gregory XIII . . .",

and, 10.11.1764,³ Mgr Cornelius informed the Sacr. Congregation that he had received

"replies to various letters, and the decree for the prohibition of the old calendar being "adopted, as the Fathers in Julfa had done, and also regarding the obligation Armenian "priests have of celebrating in the vestments of their own rite."

In regard to this second correction Bishop Emmanuel of Baghdad explained the point in his reply of 5.1.1763 to Rome:⁴

" . . . I shall see your orders executed regarding the Catholic Armenian priests at Basra, "who have hitherto been using our vestments to celebrate Holy Mass, and other functions, "which is expressly contrary to the decree of our Holy Father Pope Benedict XIV."

But he added—and it was sad irony:

"The Armenian priests were only two, of whom the younger died about 6 months ago, "and the survivor is so aged and infirm that he can say Mass only very rarely. . . ."

On 5.10.1764⁵ Fr. J. B. de Bernardis sent a complete "list of Catholics in Julfa and neighborhood", showing a total of 18 persons of the Armenian rite and 13 of the Latin rite.⁶ Fourteen of them were women, nine of them children: one was the wife of Count John Shari-man, who was then living in Venice, another of a refugee trader in Madras. That did not embrace the whole of Persia, but illustrates the havoc to the Christian Faith of those twenty intervening years of rapine and slaughter, anarchy and extortionate oppression, seeing that in his Latin report to the Sacr. Congregation of 1740 Bishop Emmanuel had estimated the numbers of Catholics in Julfa at 5,000 or over, and in 1745 the Jesuit superior had testified to Rome that they were many more than formerly. A wider perspective of numbers is given in Bishop Cornelius' letter of 3.5.1765⁷ to the Cardinal Prefect when, after protesting against

¹ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 357.

² In a letter of 2.6.1766 Fr. de Bernardis again referred the question because the Latin calendar was 35 days in advance of the Armenian.

³ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 286.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 292.

⁵ *Idem*, p. 312.

⁶ Later in his letter of 20.10.1765 he gave other figures: "24 souls of the Armenian rite, 5 of the Latin rite". Writing, 4.11.1937, the Superior of the Lazarist (Vincentian) Fathers of Isfahan estimated *present* numbers of Armenian Catholics to be about 150 at Julfa, 1,000 in all Persia: that the schismatic Armenians would be about 3,500 at Julfa, 20,000 in the province of Isfahan, between 30,000-40,000 for all Persia.

⁷ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 308.

the 'fairy tales' his touchy neighbour Carmelite, the Bishop of Baghdad, had spread in Rome of the tranquillity in Persia, he continued:

"Let him demonstrate how many, and who are the Catholics who have up to today 'returned to Persia, and whence they departed, notwithstanding all the invitations and 'assurances of Karim Khan and the repeated pressure I myself had brought on them, 'offering to accompany them myself . . . can he mention to your Eminence a single one 'of the Catholic rite who emigrated as having returned to Julfa or Isfahan and remained 'there? Two years ago a Catholic Armenian, a silversmith by trade, attempted to go there 'in order to aid by his work his family, which had been left in Julfa, but very soon I saw 'him back in Basra, cursing the hour he had gone there. As to the schismatic Armenians, 'those who have returned to Julfa at the very utmost number a score of persons, all 'of them people who were living on alms in Basra and had nothing to lose by returning 'to Persia. The most noteworthy of them was an Armenian 'bishop' or Vartapet, to 'whom Karim Khan, in order to induce him to go there, granted the 'lordship' of Julfa, 'so that now the administration both spiritual and temporal of that place is in the hands 'of this Armenian Vartapet, a heretic working great harm to the Faith and liberty of the 'missionaries. But all this will be better understood from the true and faithful statement 'which I am about to lay before you regarding both spiritual and temporal affairs in this 'country. As to spiritual matters here is the list of Catholic souls now in Persia.

"In *Isfahan* there is not one single baptized soul, Catholic or Armenian.

"*Shiraz*, a heretical Armenian church,¹ with some Armenians and one priest, with 'no Catholic there.

"*Tabriz*, a heretical Armenian church, with some Armenians.

"*Hamadan*, a heretical Armenian church.

"*Rasht*, although there is no Catholic permanently there, Catholic Armenian traders 'often come there from Astrakhan for commerce.

"*Bandar 'Abbas*, there is one Latin Catholic family living there, consisting of 7 persons.

"*Bushire*, there are 35 souls.

"*Kharg*, there are 100 souls,² including the Catholic soldiers, but not counting the 'passengers who come to the last two places on board ships from India and other parts, 'at times there being as many as 200" (i.e. Catholic) "persons.

"*Julfa*, there have stayed behind 30 souls altogether, the majority women. In order 'the better to be assured of them you can see from the enclosed note sent me by Fr. 'J. B. de Bernardis, O.P., written in his own hand; but I should warn you that from 'the number in question there should be deducted all the girls, who, born of a Catholic 'father, have a schismatic mother, because not only along with their mothers do they 'frequent the heretical church, but further it is very probable that they will marry 'heretics for want of Catholic husbands, as already others have done. In the second 'place there should be deducted from that number those who, as the Dominican Father 'himself informs you, go sometimes to the Catholic church, at others to the schismatic 'church, some out of fear, others out of self-interest, others again for the sake of com- 'panionship, and some lastly out of indifference in matters of Faith, so that the Father 'in question thought perhaps he was giving me a great piece of good news, when 'writing that at Easter he had eight Communion made.

"That is the state and number to which the Catholic community in Persia is now reduced.

"As regards ecclesiastics, in the whole diocese there is no secular priest, nor any Catholic 'cleric: of the missionaries there remain only the Dominican in Julfa mentioned, and here 'with me at Bushire one Discalced Carmelite Father, whom from time to time I send to 'hold missions on the island of Kharg, which is only a few hours' distance from here '(Bushire).

¹ Not the existing schismatic Armenian building which dates from early in the 1800's (see English mural tablets), but possibly a smaller and previous edifice still standing, used as a store.

² Bushire and Kharg paradoxically in 1764 had the largest Catholic communities in the country.

"Of all the Houses, Residences and churches of the missionaries there exist no others than these last—two at Kharg and Bushire founded by me before I became bishop—and that of the Dominicans at Julfa. In addition to these, Fr. de Bernardis has just informed me that, in conformity with the wish of the Sac. Congregation communicated to him by me, he has succeeded in recovering the house of the Jesuit Fathers on payment of some money, and under the obligation of paying the annual taxes.

"But there is no objection on the part of the government to houses being held in Persia—and there can be had very fine ones at a low price, as there are an infinite number deserted and abandoned in Julfa, among them those of the Messrs. Shariman, for which their former masters mourn and grieve, as they lack money to pay the annual taxes and impositions. At present, under the rule of Karim Khan these are not very excessive, but they might be in the future through the avarice and whims of governors and tax-farmers, as already happened in the time of the famous Tahmasp Quli Khan, which was the principal reason why the Jesuit Fathers abandoned their Residence there. . . .

"I forbear to speak here about Georgia, the most noteworthy part of my diocese, both because there has not yet been notified me the assignment of a part of it by the Sac. Congregation to the pastoral care of Mgr the Vicar Apostolic at Constantinople, as also because till now I have received no acknowledgment or reply at all to my letters written to the Capuchin Father Prefect of that mission, whom I had appointed Vicar General. All that I have gathered from some Georgians who had come from there is that a Capuchin lay brother, a physician by profession, had obtained from Karim Khan three 'farmans' for the restitution to the missionaries of his Order of the fine church and Residence they had in Tiflis, but that Prince Heraklios had paid no attention to such orders. . . ."

Then, turning to the point whether he himself could do better by proceeding from Bushire to Julfa, Bishop Cornelius went on:

". . . In order to get governors to give effect to such orders influential friends and money are needed (and where am I to find them?), whereas on the contrary the Armenians, our opponents, as being subjects of the country, have means both of getting their injustices put into execution, and of doing us harm. . . .

"To whom am I to have recourse to get them to listen to reason, now that there is no longer any European Resident there, nor any of the Messrs. Shariman, nor any Catholic of position able to assist me? . . . I know it would be necessary to be on the spot to understand these reasons fully, but I should think that the experience of 28 years that I have of these countries, and of dealing with Armenians ought to suffice to merit credence, even in the eyes of the most critical. No matter what might happen, I would willingly overlook all these points to the contrary and personal insults, which I might receive while dwelling in Julfa, were my presence to be able to serve in the re-establishment of the Christian community. But now I do not find in present circumstances any foundation on which to be able to hope for that, because—apart from the omnipotence of God, whose hand is not shortened—speaking solely according to human reasoning, it seems to me that from two causes alone could such a re-establishment be expected, i.e. either from the return to Julfa of the Catholic emigrants, or from a fresh conversion of the heretics and infidels. As to the former I can assert for a certainty that there is no hope of it, for, far from the invitations and pressing instances of Karim Khan having succeeded in inducing a single one to return,¹ they have rather served to persuade them (the Armenians) to leave Basra the sooner with their families, some for India, some for Georgia, some for Muscovy, some for Europe, as have just done (a few months ago only) four whole families of Julfa Catholics, who have departed to live in Venice, as your Eminence can ascertain: and shortly they will be followed by others.

¹ Fr. de Bernardis, O.P., from Julfa itself confirmed this, 20.10.1765 (*S.N.R.*, VII, p. 319).

"Neither the number of Catholics nor that of the heretics is apparently increasing, for all that Karim Khan endeavoured to invite the Armenians of the Diaspora."

"As to the hope of new conversions, if it be a question of the Muhammadans, it is not "within the realms of possibility, or even to be imagined: if (it be thought) of those ancient "Persian fire-worshippers called 'Gabr', none are to be found in those parts, all having "been compelled to become Muhammadans fifty and more years ago in the reign of Shah "Sultan Husain. So there remains no hope except of the conversion of the heretical "Armenians. But this is a very difficult business to encompass in Julfa, because of the "influence and opposition of the bishops, monks and priests of the race . . . : it would "appear to me that in the present circumstances my staying and residing in Bushire and "Kharg, places near each other, would be more useful and necessary: firstly, because of "the larger number of Catholics there are here and who doubtless will increase: secondly, "because of the greater security that the protection and influence of the English and "Dutch established here afford us:¹ thirdly, because of the greater liberty and facility there "is here for working at the conversion of souls. . . ."

After the expulsion of the Dutch from Kharg the Bishop, 11.3.1766,² used these words about his staying in Bushire:

"God has willed to ease the pain it was to me not to be able to give satisfaction to the "Sacr. Congregation in its pressure on me to go to Isfahan, as He has permitted me to "be here to show all the charity possible in spirituals and in kind to these poor Dutch, "who with their governor and officers have been left here half naked . . . nor has this "charitable assistance of ours remained fruitless for souls, because . . . I have disposed "already some to abjure error and baptized also some Hindu slaves of the Dutch. . . ."

That lengthy epilogue was minuted in the Secretariat of the Sacr. Congregation:

"Let him go to Isfahan, when he can: he is permitted to remain as long as legitimate "obstacles last."

Here, with reference to the anticipated opposition by the schismatic clergy, may best be interpolated such evidence as has been observed of continuance during the period covered by this chapter of the malice on the part of the dissident Armenians, which formed so serious a difficulty and problem under the later Safawi monarchs and Nadir. The first allusion to the attitude of the schismatics noticed in the present search, on the contrary, represents the other current of their relations with the Latins. While a refugee at Basra, Bishop Sebastian wrote, 1.5.1754, to Mgr Lercari, Secretary of the Congregation, that:

"The heretical 'archbishop' of Julfa, who is a rival of the present patriarch, is here too "in Basra with his priests and people, who have taken asylum here. One day he came to "see me and beg for a letter of recommendation for Rome and Venice where he wishes "to go for his greater spiritual welfare. From this I gather he wants to embrace and profess "our holy Catholic Faith. To this end I am seeing and cultivating him. If this spiritual "business should be successful, his people will all become Catholics, because they, having "smelt something of the business, unanimously said to me in these past days: 'If our " " 'Vartapet'" (i.e. the 'archbishop') 'becomes a Catholic, we shall all become Catholics.'"

But the remnant of Catholics in Julfa were made to suffer even by the comparatively small number of lay schismatics left: for, 20.5.1757, the Dominican Fr. Raymond reported to the Vicar General at Basra:

" . . . You know of the persecution stirred up in Julfa by the Kalantar" (i.e. headman: town bailiff) "Sarkis: that is, for more than a month he has been taking either by force

¹ Within a year the eclipse of the Dutch in Kharg upset this argument, and a year or two later the temporary withdrawal from Bushire of the English followed, as related elsewhere.

² *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 358.

"or by consent money and goods from everyone in order to pay the fines on Julfa. I shall tell you briefly what he has done to me: on 8.5.1757 he took from me four valuable "deposits" (i.e. of money or valuables by Catholic refugees abroad) ". . . on 15.5.1757 "he also took the goods deposited with, or given to the convent by . . . On 8.5.1757 he "also took from me and from others money to pay fines on Julfa, from me 12 Tumans: "a Georgian merchant named George paid for me, otherwise they would have mutilated "me with lashes. In three hours before daylight I had to find that money, and I was "twice given the bastinado . . .":

and Bishop Sebastian was evidently deceived as to the extent of the desire for amity and concord on the part of the 'Vartapet' who had visited him—"a Vartapet in exile might be a "dove, but at home was a roaring lion"—for 5.1.1765, the Bishop of Baghdad notified¹ the Sacr. Congregation:

"The heretical 'bishop' of Julfa who for several years past had taken asylum in Basra "along with a part of his flock has shown more zeal for heresy than our missionaries for "the Catholic Faith, because, despite his great age, and the easy tranquil life he was leading "at Basra, *about a year ago* he finally went back to Julfa, whence I have a report that he is "causing many anxieties to Fr. John Baptist de Bernardis, is doing all he can to quench "the Catholic Faith there. If there were several missionaries it would be easier to oppose his "vexatious proceedings and work effectively for the conversion of heretics. . . ."

It would appear from a letter of the Bishop of Isfahan, 2.5.1765,² that the Vartapet or schismatic 'bishop' of Julfa

"even wanted Fr. de Bernardis" (as the latter himself wrote) "to show him the letters "patent for his ministry, and, having summoned him to his tribunal, warned him threaten- "ingly not to put his foot in the houses of Armenians, even Catholic ones . . .":

and the Bishop of Isfahan doubted whether by his going up-country himself evident harm would not be caused,

". . . putting the few Catholics in danger of being entirely ruined by the persecution, which "the Armenian heretics would set on foot on hearing of the arrival of a Catholic bishop, "the more so as . . . there is united in the hands of their 'bishop' both civil and spiritual "authority. . . . I am certainly ready to admit that I should not be directly molested in "the matter of the exercise of religious observances, in view of the 'farmans' obtained from "the 'prince'. But, instead, they would take the line of having me summoned before the "Persian judges (who can easily be corrupted by money) as *being responsible for all debts left "by the missionaries and for those of the poor Catholics*. They would accuse me of being the "principal cause of splits in the families" (i.e. religious discords) "and of the emigration "of all the Armenian subjects of Persia, who have gone to Europe—charges and accusations "all of them absolutely false. But to whom am I to turn to get them to listen to reason. . . ."

It is evident that this apprehension of being arrested, made responsible personally for the debts and taxes and obligations of refugee Catholic Armenians then in Europe or elsewhere, in addition to those of the Religious dead and living, apprehension of disrespect to their ecclesiastical character loomed large in the minds of both Bishop Sebastian and Bishop Cornelius, and was a principal reason why they shrank from, and adduced reasons against, going to Julfa. Indeed Bishop Cornelius argued that

¹ S.N.R., VII, p. 292.

² *Idem*, p. 308.

'one or two simple missionaries gifted with patience and prudence can manage better, by 'shutting their eyes and mouths at many things (which I should not be able, nor know 'how to do) without causing annoyance to the heretical Armenians. . . .'

To return to the general position of Catholics in Julfa and the country. Instead of more Dominicans to aid the Vicar General the Sacr. Congregation sent out Fr. John son of Aratun, an Armenian of Julfa by race who in 1758 had been sent by Fr. Cornelius (as he then was) to Leghorn and Rome and entered as a theological student in the Urban College. Now a priest of the Armenian rite he reached Julfa, 7.10.1769,¹ and went to reside at the church of the Annunciation, the 'Shariman' church—Fr. de Bernardis, O.P., added to this news the ironic remark:

"to the satisfaction of the Catholics and without opposition from the heretics, who will be "the more inexcusable now, if they do not become converted, seeing that the sole objection "always made against me is that they (the schismatics) do not hear their own tongue "spoken in church,² and in particular that we refuse to give them Holy Communion in "giving it in one species alone. . . ."

Somewhat inexplicably, however, another Dominican, a certain Fr. Norbert Secker (who had been still in Ravenna ready to start on 13.7.1768)³ arrived in Julfa, 28.11.1769,

"sent from Mausil by way of Hamadan by Fr. Dominic Lanza, because the latter knew "that for five years and more I had been waiting anxiously for a companion (while Fr. John "from Propaganda had said that he could not leave Baghdad because of the rising of the "Arabs): we are all three now here (ready) to go wherever Mgr the Bishop of Isfahan "may direct . . .",

when, on the other hand, a minute was made in the Sacr. Congregation at the session of 7.7.1770:

"reply to him (Fr. de Bernardis) and repeat the order that he should proceed to Mausil "together with Fr. Secker, the more so as soon there will be two (ex)pupils . . ." (i.e. Armenians from the Urban College of Propaganda Fide).

In fact, the other Armenian youth taken with him to Rome for theological education by Mgr Cornelius in 1760 and by now ordained priest, Fr. John son of Isaac, who had got to Basra, 14.1.1771,⁴ also reached Julfa, 13.7.1771. When it might have been expected that to remedy past deficiencies and negligences the four priests would work in unison, on the contrary discord arose between the two Dominicans and the two Uniat priests, and the archives for 1771 contain a number of complaints made to Rome by one against the other, on which it is undesirable to dwell fully here—Bishop Cornelius ascribed⁵ the fault to Fr. Norbert Secker "who a few months after his arrival incited Fr. de Bernardis, the Vicar" (General) "to go to war with Fr. John son of Aratun." Writing⁶ to the Cardinals of the Congregation the Dominican Vicar General charged Fr. John son of Aratun with a number of 'schismatic' practices, and with upsetting the norm for the Catholics by going solemnly to bless houses of heretics, with 'sending 'them consecrated hosts as the Armenians are wont to send to those who have a part in Masses,

¹ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 563.

² Compare what the Armenian ex-pupil of the Urban College, Fr. John son of Isaac, wrote, 18.2.1771 (*S.N.R.*, VII, p. 604), to the Cardinal Prefect from Basra:

" . . . Not only the Catholics but the heretics too in these parts are so attached to the use of the literal" (i.e. colloquial) "tongue and to it being employed when officiating that, if an Armenian priest does not know it, he becomes discredited "with everybody as an *ignoramus*."

³ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 496.

⁵ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 631, 30.6.1771.

⁴ *Vide* his own letter, 18.2.1771, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 604.

⁶ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 572.

'but at a distance, and, when admonished, claiming to be, as of another rite, exempt from the jurisdiction of Fr. de Bernardis';¹ they used to celebrate marriages (of Catholics) with heretics,² they offered prayers for the (schismatic) dead, and used to go to the heretical churches. On their part the young Roman-trained Uniat priests asserted to the Sacr. Congregation that their own arrival and reopening of the "national", i.e. Shariman, church, abandoned for years previously, had been displeasing to the Dominican Fathers, who had even taken some of the disputes to the tribunal of the schismatic Vartapet.

"Not without difficulty" (after Fr. Secker's departure for Rasht) "did I succeed in making peace between Fr. de Bernardis and the priest from Propaganda Fide, Fr. John son of 'Aratun . . .'"

wrote Bishop Cornelius. Fr. Norbert Secker, O.P., had indeed gone off, 22.7.1770, to Rasht in Gilan, where he had persuaded the peripatetic cleric Emmanuel Caro to abandon and sell that mission-house,³ and together they had returned to Julfa.⁴ At Eastertide 1771, with the addition of Fr. de Bernardis they set off to Shiraz, whence Fr. Secker had made his way back to Mausil by August 1771.⁵ The Vicar General Fr. de Bernardis, however, had, 18.11.1770,⁶ pointed out to the Cardinal Prefect that:

"if two Armenian priests, alike in character and sentiments, were to remain alone in the mission" (at Julfa) "they will bring it down to what it was some time ago, to its being indistinguishable from the heretical church, except in name. . . ."

Making the position still more confused, on 22.1.1771 Fr. Dominic Lanza far away in Mesopotamia recommended⁷ to the Congregation that, in view of the imprisonment at and expulsion of the Dominicans from Mausil, Frs. de Bernardis and Secker should not be withdrawn from Persia. Finally, from Baghdad, 30.6.1771, the Bishop of Isfahan also⁸ demurred in a letter to the Cardinal Prefect to the withdrawal of the Dominicans, his opinion and that of the Vicar General being remarkably akin to those held in similar, but more recent situations:

"Fr. J. B. de Bernardis writes to me from Julfa that he has received instructions from your Eminence to quit that mission and go to that at Mausil: and he asks my advice. I have replied that I did not wish to interfere, since I had received no notice at all about this from the Sacr. Congregation. . . . Your Eminence will say that the two priests from Propaganda Fide sent are more than enough for the guidance of so scanty a flock. Quite so. But I should be afraid that they would *not be able to remain without a European Religious to watch over their conduct* and, above all, protect them against persecution by the heretical Armenian monks, priests and laymen. With the knowledge I have of the character of this race and of Julfa people in particular, I know the interest they have in sending and receiving through the intermediary of European Fathers residing there letters for and from their relatives in Europe, and in making use of them" (the European Fathers) "to receive with greater security the remittances of money they expect from those relatives, added to which is the fear lest, should they molest the Fathers, the latter should cause umbrage to be taken against the" (Armenian) "race by the consuls at Basra and Directors of the India Company, by whom the Fathers are considered to be protected. This inclines them not only to put up with European missionaries in Julfa, but even to pretend willingness to see them there, and out of consideration for them they allow the Catholic church, in which the Armenian Catholic priests officiate, to remain open.

¹ "These orientals love an oriental enemy more than a European friend," was Fr. de Bernardi's aphorism.

² In *Lettere dalla Sacr. Cong.*, vol. 236, p. 163, are instructions to the Armenian administrator of the diocese about this.

³ Bp. Cornelius, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 631.

⁴ *Vide* Fr. Secker, Julfa, 14.3.1771, *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 607.

⁵ Bp. Emmanuel of Baghdad had been "edified" by Fr. Secker (*S.N.R.*, VII, p. 361).

⁶ *S.N.R.*, VII, p. 606. ⁷ *Idem*, p. 589.

⁸ *Idem*, p. 631.

"But, once there is no longer there any European Father, the Armenians will no longer have any regard for the latter priests. The schismatic Armenian bishop and monks, in whose hands remains the authority for governing Julfa, will not fail to drive them away, with the risk that the mission there will be irremediably lost. . . ." ¹

That was why Bishop Cornelius urged that, if the Sacr. Congregation were firm in withdrawing from the Dominicans the mission at Julfa, Carmelites should be dispatched to replace them.

"After having departed from Julfa to go to his new appointment, Fr. J. B. de Bernardis received fresh orders from Mgr Cornelius to return again to Julfa until instructions came from the Sacr. Congregation or another Religious arrive. So he is still here . . ." ²

wrote Fr. John son of Isaac from Julfa, 10.5.1772: and Bishop Cornelius' report in Rome of December 1772 ³ explained:

"As to the present condition of the missions in Persia, the tyrannical rule of Quli Khan and civil warfare which followed his death, just as they were the principal cause of the ruin of Persia, so they were also of" (the ruin of) "the missions in that country and of the very bad condition in which they continue to be through abandonment by almost all the Missionaries: at present in all that vast empire there is only Fr. J. B. de Bernardis, O.P., whom I took the liberty of retaining there in the position of my Vicar, notwithstanding the orders of the Sacr. Congregation which he had received to transfer himself to the mission in Mausil, because of the need for him to remain at Julfa to preserve the Catholic Armenian church, which I had succeeded in recovering a few years ago by giving over the administration of it to two native priests, former pupils of the Urban College, Fr. John son of Aratun and Fr. John son of Isaac. I anticipated that, were one European Religious at least not on the spot to uphold them, the schismatic 'archbishop', monks and priests there would not have failed to drive them away and take possession of that Catholic parish church, to the spiritual hurt of the small flock there, by virtue of the authority, temporal as well, which the Regent had granted to the said 'archbishop' . . . as your Eminence could not have foreseen. It is true that the Catholic flock there is reduced to a small number and has not grown by return of faithful who had emigrated and are scattered in other countries. Too much account should not be made of the difficulty made by many Catholic families, who have taken refuge in Venice or other far-off countries, about returning to their homeland, as it is known that the Armenian race is given over to trade. If trade reopens in Persia, as is hoped, they will certainly be the first to send their representatives and agents, at the least, because of the advantage, which they, better than any other race, know how to extract from it, being . . . natives of the country.

"Then, granted that the Catholics who have remained in Persia are at present reduced to a small number, what of it? Is the Catholic worker to rely solely on those who have already become Catholics, or on those whom, by the Divine aid and his own efforts as an apostle, he ought to hope to make by converting infidels and reconciling heretics to the Catholic Church?"

So Bishop Cornelius proceeded to recommend the re-establishment of certain missions in Persia, not merely in Julfa as previously, but with an eye to advantageous geographical distribution:

"In my opinion as a beginning of attempts to reopen in Persia four Residences are indicated as the most necessary and likely to be useful:

¹ This prophetic warning was fulfilled within 20 years, as would hardly have been the case with Religious from Europe 'holding the fort' as a point of honour.

² S.N.R., VIII, p. 34.

³ *Idem*, p. 6.

- “(a) that at Rasht, the chief town of Gilan . . . so as to assist the Catholic traders there,
“a good number of whom every year come from Moscow, Armenia and Georgia,
“because of the great mart for silk there . . .
- “(b) the second mission to be provided is that in Julfa . . .
- “(c) the third to try” (and restore) “should be that at Shiraz, a town which now may be
“accounted one of the chief in the country, because Karim Khan, the ruler, has
“established his ‘royal’ Court there. Our Fathers had, years ago, a fine hospice,
“but in the narrowing of the periphery of the town which was later effected
“our house was razed to the foundations. . . .
- “(d) the fourth would be that which I myself opened in Bushire . . . to assist the
“Christians, who come from Basra and by ships from India, on board of which
“there are always to be found Christian sailors and Catholic passengers, and
“often too Indian heathens to be baptized. . . . Besides it would be easy for
“the missionary there to take refuge at Basra in case of need and sickness, and
“to obtain quickly from our Discalced Carmelite Fathers there a companion to
“assist him, because of the proximity and constant communication between
“those two towns.

“Then, in order to facilitate the introduction, and stabilize the residence in Persia of the
“new missionaries, it would be opportune (should the Sacr. Congregation so judge) to
“commission them to deliver some Brief from His Holiness, recommending them to the
“Regent Karim Khan, on the same lines as those written formerly by Roman Pontiffs to
“the Safawi Shahs . . . and I am sure, from what I know of the character of the reigning
“prince and of the very great insistence he shows in winning for Persia its former prestige,
“that the missionaries will be favourably received and obtain confirmation of the privileges
“granted them by the Shahs of old for the free exercise of their mission, especially should
“two at least be sent with some knowledge of medicine, one for Rasht, the other for Shiraz.”

The Bishop of Isfahan passed on to an important point which had been too often overlooked in the past and which was one of the main reasons for the Orders being unable to maintain sufficient Religious in Persia during the eighteenth century.

“Above all the Sacr. Congregation must be watchful that the missionaries receive
“punctually their annual allowances, lack of which has been one of the pretexts for leaving
“these missions deserted. Permit me also to add that besides their journey expenses and
“annual subsidy there should be assigned to the missionaries there some extraordinary
“grant in aid at the beginning, in order that they may put in a state of repair the ruined
“Residences or those threatening to collapse, and they should be provided with the sacred
“vestments, necessary books, etc. . . .”

Lastly, as to the see:

“. . . For the present dispatch of a bishop to Persia should be held in suspense, at least
“until the return to that country of some European Resident or Minister, who would protect
“him against unjust claims by those Persian or Armenian creditors that the bishop be con-
“sidered surety and answerable for debtors who have fled to Venice or other parts of Europe,
“on the false supposition that the bishop has power to compel them to make payment.
“Meanwhile the Bishop of Baghdad as Administrator of the diocese of Isfahan, instituted
“by decree of the Sacr. Congregation, can provide those working in Persia with the Holy
“Oils. . . .”

Nothing came of all this sage advice, the product of more than thirty years' experience in the mission field, and a mind of real prescience: had the Sacr. Congregation and the Orders bridged over the next thirty years by keeping alive a nucleus of Catholic posts, and above all by keeping in repair and Catholic occupation the valuable and historic Residences and their

sites, they would have found themselves in the quiet and ordered government of the nineteenth century under the Qajar Shahs, Fath 'Ali and Muhammad, and been able to build up rapidly the Catholic position on its traditional sites and with all the advantages of continuity and, for a variety of reasons, the schismatic Vartapets far less in a position to molest. Then, as far as human eye can judge, the twentieth century would have seen the Catholic Church vastly more influential both with the people and with the government than it is today in Persia.

For reasons unexplained the Vicar General, Fr. de Bernardis, quitted Julfa and on 31.5.1774¹ arrived in Basra, where he remained, teaching Armenian to Carmelite Religious until 20.7.1775, when

"he passed to the better life, a missionary above all criticism, living for God and his 'neighbours. . . .'"²

The Armenian priest, Fr. John son of Aratun, who was appointed to succeed him as Administrator of the diocese of Isfahan by decree of the Sacr. Congregation, 8.6.1776, in three letters, two of them dated 20.4.1777, the other 18.9.1777, furnished the Sacr. Congregation with information regarding the diocese. Not the originals but the combined gist of them as given by Cardinal Pamphilj in his report in the session of 7.9.1778³ will here be translated:

"Beginning with the episcopal centre, Isfahan, he states there are three churches and as 'many Convents, which at present are inhabited by Muslims, the first that of the Discalced Carmelites, the second that of the Augustinians, the third that of the Capuchins: these, 'he asserts, could be redeemed with little difficulty from the Muslims; but, since there is 'no one to go and live in them, because there are no Catholics domiciled there, in the 'present circumstances these convents could not be put to any use: when at times Catholic 'merchants turn up, at small inconvenience to themselves they go to Julfa, which is only 'half-an-hour's distance by road from Isfahan.

"Then, in Julfa there are four churches and three convents—that where the Administrator has established his quarters is dedicated to the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, 'and is called the 'Shariman' church.⁴ Almost all the others threaten to collapse in ruins, 'as there has been nobody in charge of them in the past. The best preserved is that which 'formerly belonged to the suppressed Company of Jesus, although at present it lacks 'furnishings and the ornaments needed in church and house, and it is situated among the 'Muslims, far away from the township. This church, together with the residence and 'vineyard, had fallen into the hands of the heretics by reason that the deceased Vicar, 'Fr. de Bernardis, entrusted it to a perfidious Christian who mortgaged it to the heretics. 'Seven months ago the present administrator redeemed it by expending 60 scudi. For four 'years, too, he has had charge of the hospice and church of the Dominican Fathers⁵ which 'is in the middle of the township and provided with everything necessary to a poor priest. 'The one most in ruins, he says, is that of the Discalced Carmelites which is furnished with 'nothing but a few books and pictures; and, besides, the site is in the midst of Muslims and 'all of them evil people, robbers and bloodthirsty. In order to repair those last two churches 'and pay the tribute on them, the Administrator says that he has spent about another '30 scudi—all of it . . . from his own stipend. . . ."

The Administrator went on to report that at Shiraz, the seat of Karim Khan, there were no Catholics permanently resident except two butchers living a very bad life and two or three soldiers, who had practically become Muslims, at rare intervals some Catholic traders passed

¹ and ² *Cont. Basra Chron.*

³ *Acta* for 1778, p. 309.

⁴ The Superior of the Lazarist (Vincentian) Fathers at Isfahan stated, 4.11.1937:

"About 200 metres away from the property" (i.e. the site of their church and Residence at Julfa) "of the Carmelites 'there is indeed a small church called 'of the Annunciation', for long past not used for worship, in the vicinity of a 'hammam' which still bears the name of the Shariman family."

⁵ Which were being used by the Priests of the Mission (the Lazarist Fathers) from their coming to Julfa till 1934.



AT JULFA, THE VINEYARD KNOWN AS “THE GARDEN OF THE JESUITS”
The ruined building is all that remains of their establishment (1933)

through there: in Gilan at Anzali, a port on the Caspian Sea, where the other Armenian graduate of the Urban College, Fr. John son of Isaac, was residing,¹ and where there were always Catholic traders from Astrakhan, Georgia and parts of Turkey on account of the silk trade, the numbers of Catholics at times reached thirty, and there was the more room to do good because there were few heretics: at Tabriz there was no longer any church, or Catholic inhabitants. The Armenian administrator ended by mentioning that his own occupation was to teach Christian doctrine, to give the catechism every Sunday, and do every kind of parochial duty. He was hard put to it to find means of subsistence, because he had to get his living by his own industry, and keep up the church as well; he had no income, nor anything but the alms from Masses. As, however, he shared those with the poor of his flock the total was insufficient, and at times he had to go without food and clothing.

It might, however, be noted that on 3.6.1775 and 6.7.1775² the Sacr. Congregation addressed letters to two Dominicans, one of them Fr. Leopold Soldini, at Khui in the far north-west corner of Persia, and at Salmas, near lake Urmieh inside Persia on that frontier.

For the purpose of this work the archives of letters and reports received by the Sacr. Congregation have not been explored beyond this date; but from the late Fr. L. Lemmens O.F.M.'s *Hierarchia Latina Orientis*³ may be quoted the mention during the session of the Congregation on 21.3.1791:

"The news already had from the Vicar Apostolic in Constantinople and from the pro-vicar of Baghdad regarding the *emigration of the Catholics from Persia* is now confirmed by 'Fr. John son of Aratun, Administrator of the diocese of Isfahan, in a letter from Julfa dated 30.11.1789. He says that the Persian Mission, at one time so flourishing, because 'of oppression by the tyrannical government there has been reduced to the number of seven Catholics only: all the rest have run away, or are dead. In this state of affairs he has frequently asked advice and assistance from the Sacr. Congregation; but, not having obtained it, and being no longer able to exist there, he says that he has decided to abandon the empty churches, and escape with the few Catholics who have remained to Baghdad. 'Later, a letter has been received from Fr. Fulgentius of S. Mary, pro-vicar in Baghdad, which informs us that the Administrator, together with his Catholics, has safely reached Baghdad, where he thinks of settling. . . ."

It must have been after the death of Fr. John son of Aratun—and the date of that has not been observed—that the following undated⁴ 'summary' regarding the position of the "Persian missions" was completed in the secretariat of the Sacr. Congregation:

"At present the Administrator of that bishopric is the (former) Armenian student" (of the Urban College), "Fr. John son of Aratun, under the leadership of whom the few remaining Catholics emigrated from Persia and established themselves in Basra and Baghdad.⁵ . . . He shows himself very well disposed towards the Sacr. Congregation, and by his will has made it the legatee of all his possessions. Notice of his death has now been received.

" . . . In Julfa . . . there are still some Catholics, and three Catholic churches which were left in charge of a Persian. . . . In Tihran⁶ eight to ten Catholics have remained. The church in Chahar-mahal has also passed into the hands of Persians. In Hamadan there remain six poor Armenian families. In Shiraz, Bushire, Bandar 'Abbas, Gilan . . .

¹ According to *Lettere dalla Sacr. Cong.*, No. 34, on 26.2.1774 Fr. John son of Aratun was directed to comply with the request of the Catholics in Gilan, either by going there himself, or by sending Fr. John son of Isaac, and 180 Turkish piastres were assigned for journey money.

² *Lettere dalla Sacr. Cong.*, vol. 226, pp. 163-99.

³ No. 10.

⁴ But perhaps also after 1806, because parts of it are similarly worded to that below: it is in *S.N.R.*, I, p. 43.

⁵ It cannot be too strongly stressed that the present Armenian communities of Baghdad and Basra, in Bengal and elsewhere in India were largely founded by the emigration from Julfa of 1749-60.

⁶ Except for Shah Sultan Husain camping there, and temporary halts by Nadir Shah, this is almost the first mention of the modern capital, adopted by the Qajar dynasty.

"no news of any Catholics residing. . . . The houses the Jesuits had at Erivan (once a "bishopric) and the Capuchins at Astrakhan . . . have also been destroyed, but there are "still some Armenians at those places. Catholic Armenians are still numerous. . . .

"Also subject to the jurisdiction of the Latin bishop of Isfahan are the Georgian towns—"Tiflis, Gori and Kutais: and in them there are Armenian and Georgian priests. At each "of these places there are still Capuchin Fathers, and Fr. Philip da Forano is the "prefect. . . ."

One other such 'summary', drawn up in the secretariat—also undated but clearly from its own contents *later than 1806*—is to be found among the papers of the eighteenth century:¹

"*Persian Missions . . . Isfahan. . . .* Fr. John son of Aratun is the Administrator of the "Latin bishopric of Isfahan. Fr. Elias Karabajak" (a former) "student" (of the Urban College) "is his vicar. . . . There are no longer any Augustinians, Discalced Carmelites or Capuchins: their churches and hospices have passed into the hands of "Persians. There are no Catholics at present.

"2. *Julfa.* Here Fr. Elias Karabajak resides. . . . There are only 14 Catholics domiciled "here, apart from other adventitious ones. There are 12 churches, thirty priests, "one 'archbishop', and suffragans, all schismatic Armenian. There are 3 Catholic "churches left in the charge of a Persian.

"3. *Tihran.* There are 8 to 10 Catholics, dealers in precious stones. There is no church. "Fr. Leopold Sebastiani (a Roman), was sent as prefect of the missions in Persia . . . "but later he returned to Rome, having been recalled by the Sac. Congregation (his "last reports were dated 18.3.1805, 15.7.1805): he was allotted an extraordinary "allowance of 100 scudi in 1806 and also promised stipends would be given to the "missionaries he had taken to help him.

"*Chaharmahal.* There is no priest, nor are there any Catholics. The church has passed "into the hands of Persians.

"*Shiraz.* . . . There are no Catholics permanently here, but often 10 to 15 persons traders "temporarily. There are 40² families of heretic Armenians.

"*Bushire.* There is no priest. Many Catholic traders visit there, but none are settled.

"*Gilan.* There is no longer a priest. It is not known whether any Catholic family still "remains. . . ."³

A reference to the French ambassador "during the empire of Napoleon placing three "priests there as missionaries" may possibly date this 'summary' later than 1806, and even 1815.

That closes the story of Carmelite activities in Persia and of the general Catholic position till the end of the eighteenth century. It was 1850 before a Latin Order again settled in Persia—the Lazarists (Priests of the Mission—of S. Vincent de Paul), at Tabriz first, then at Tihiran and Isfahan (Julfa).

* * * * *

¹ *S.N.R.*, I, p. 334. Presumably then Fr. John son of Aratun died after 1806.

² This number is surprising, as there had been none before 1603, no Armenians at Shiraz or almost none till after 1700: and in 1900 not a third of that number.

³ The 'Summary' continued, speaking of Kabul in the kingdom of Afghanistan.

"A new mission was instituted there in 1806, and Father Pietro Cuzizian was appointed prefect with Father Pietro "Burnus as his companion. There is no information that Catholic Armenians and many heretics are to be found "there."

